APPLE PIE DOUGHNUTS + Italian Wedding Soup + COGNAC-SPIKED FONDUE

The Ethics of Chocolate, p.34

VegNews

VeganNEWSFOODPLANETTRAVELBUZZ

The Holiday Issue

CARAMEL!
COOKIES!
SOUPS!
CHEESE!
COCKTAILS!

+ more

Gooey, spicy, saucy caramel ... we tried them all! p.63

NYC'S HOTTEST VEG RESTAURANT

ESCAPE TO MOROCCO

2015 VEGGIE AWARDS! p.25

plus MOBY! RUSSELL! PAMELA!

DIY NUT BUTTERS p.90

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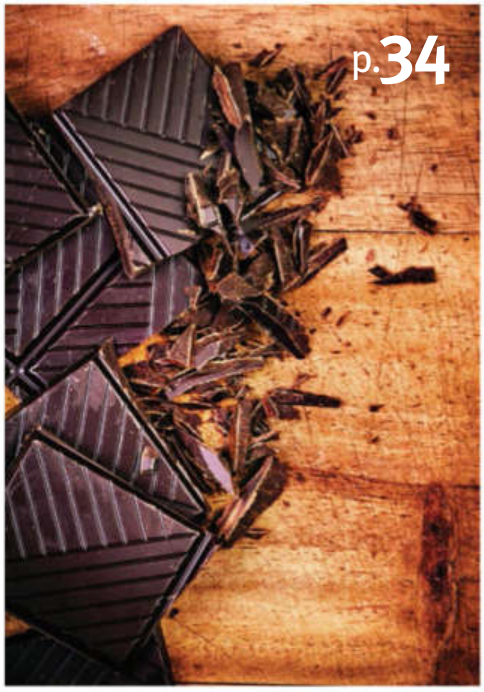
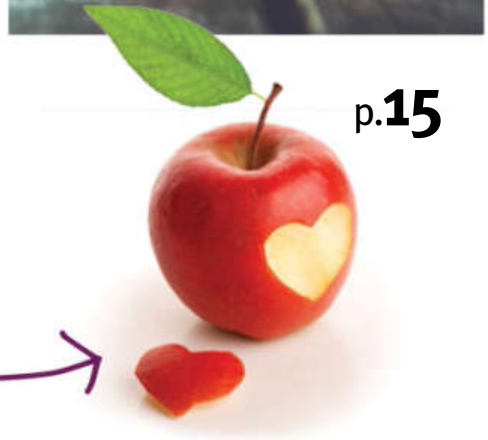
The Holiday Issue!

VegNews

November+December 2015





A new vegan medical center in Washington, DC prescribes plants over pills.

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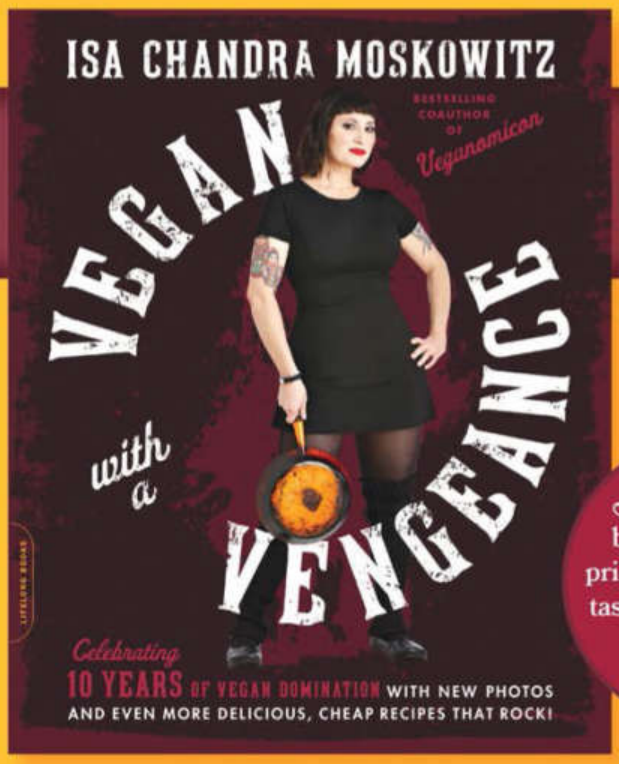
COVER PHOTO BY **KATE LEWIS**

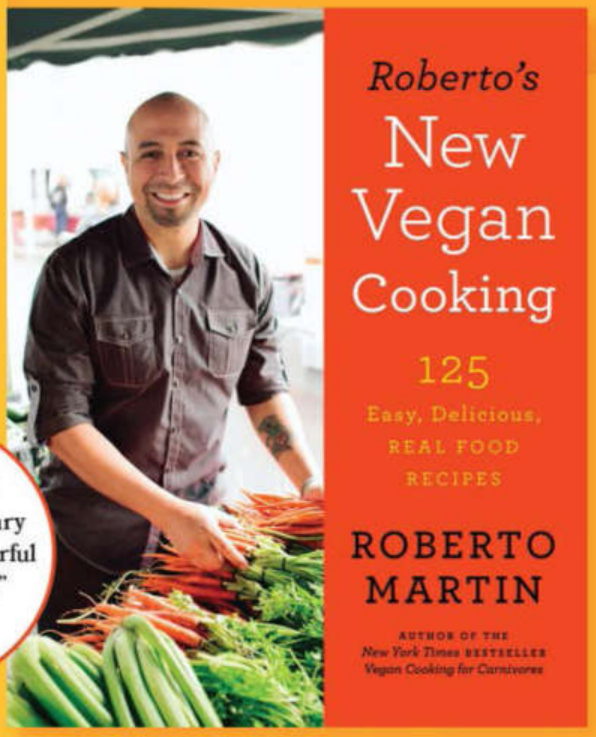
Delicious, Distinctive, Da Capo



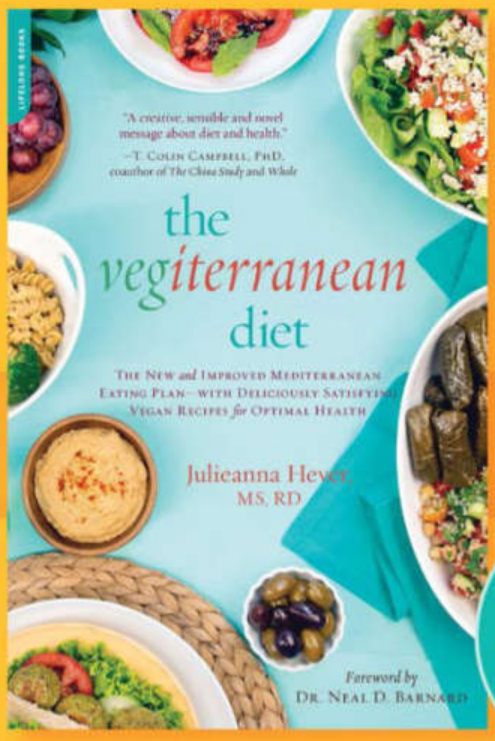
TENTH Anniversary EDITION

A vegan classic by the punk rock priestess of all things tasty—now with new recipes and in full color

New from ROBERTO MARTIN,
former personal chef of Ellen DeGeneres



"Full of ideas for how to take the ordinary and make it...flavorful and surprising." —*Publishers Weekly*



JULIANNA HEVER reveals the benefits of the beloved Mediterranean diet made vegan

"A creative, sensible, and novel message about diet and health." —T. Colin Campbell, coauthor of *The China Study*

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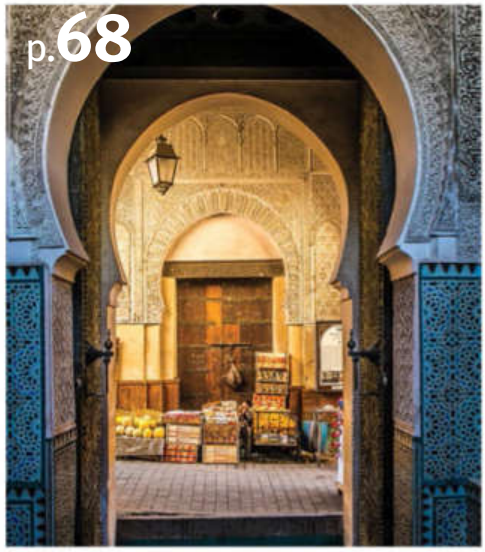

Author Tracey Stewart shares 10 of her favorite things this holiday season.

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Guide to Mexican Christmas
Throw the fiesta of the year by veganizing food and drinks often enjoyed during a Mexican Christmas celebration.

Boozy Holiday Drinks
Don't miss our guide to the season's best adult-friendly nogs, liqueurs, and dessert-worthy drinks.

DIY Decorations
Save a forest by recycling household items into holiday centerpieces.

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Let's *Celebrate!*

When I went vegan two decades ago, it wasn't pretty. Although getting meat and dairy out of my life was the best decision I have ever made, let's just say being vegan in 1995 was nowhere near what it's like to be vegan in 2015.

During those Clinton years, my newfound lifestyle made me feel better than I had ever felt before and gave me a sense of inner peace from no longer supporting an industry that caused such horrendous suffering. My body moved with a new ease, and I quickly became a walking encyclopedia of all-things vegan—from the philosophy and history to the products and cookbooks. Each day was an awakening, as I would uncover something new to enrich my veg life. Vegan Rella cheese, you made my heart (and pizza) sing! *Moosewood Cookbook*, how did I ever cook without you? And the crème de la crème: Tofutti Cutie ice cream sandwiches. Where had you been all my life? To our long-time-vegan subscribers: you know what I'm talking about.

Fast forward two decades, and those early moments of vegan euphoria are nothing compared to what we're experiencing today. The elation I felt when discovering the lone brand of dairy-free ice cream or cheese? Well, we can multiply that by 20. The joy of finding a cookbook that didn't include meat? The VegNews office gets five of those a day. The rapid rise of the plant-based lifestyle is astounding, but then again, we early adopters knew it was just a matter of time.

Perhaps one of the best indicators of just how far we've come is our annual Veggie Awards™—the world's largest survey of vegan products, people, and places. In 2002, we launched the awards with nominees such as Tofurky, Rice Dream, and Wildwood. Along the way, we added new contenders like Coconut Bliss, Daiya, Almond Breeze, Vega, and Gardein. But 2015 leaves every other year in the dust, thanks to the staggering number of nominees, categories, and votes (1.3 million, a VegNews record!). This year's Veggie Awards™ tell us that veganism's moment has arrived, and that it's here to stay.

From all of us at VegNews, happy holidays!

With gratitude,

Colleen Holland
Publisher + Co-Founder

P.S. If you love VegNews, please consider gifting a subscription to friends and family this holiday season. It's easy to do at vegnews.com/gift, and a personalized note is always included. Thank you!

Party Pics

In September, VegNews hosted launch parties in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York to toast the latest issue. From superb food and cocktails to red-carpet arrivals and fabulous swag bags, the parties were spectacular. Here are a few of my standout moments:

Guests were welcomed with leis at our San Francisco Tiki Bash

Gorgeous three-tiered cake by Whisk Bakery at the Los Angeles Mexicali Fiesta

Me and the sisters (and party co-hosts) behind Spork Foods in Los Angeles

Mini burgettes by Jay Astafa at New York's Comfort Food Shindig

The stunning dessert buffet by Vegan Treats in NYC

Colleen's Must-Read

Don't miss one of the most important stories in this issue, Bittersweet (p.34). Long-time VegNews writer Marla Rose explores the dark side of chocolate, and it may forever change the way you think about this beloved food. It did for me.

Burgettes and Vegan Treats photos: Derek Goodwin

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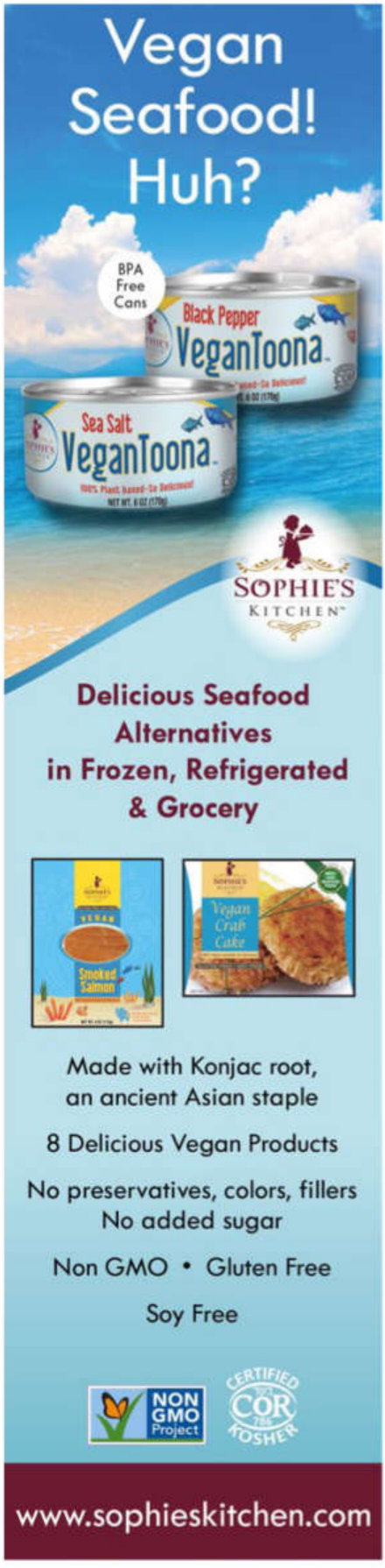

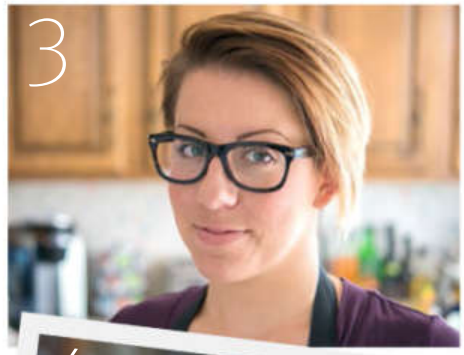

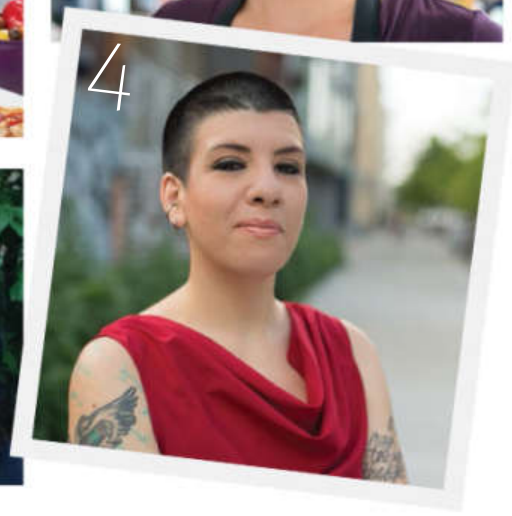

1 Heather Bell & Jenny Engel
Joy of Eating, p.46

Where we're from: We're fourth-generation Angelenos!
What we do: Teach vegan cooking classes, cater, and do consulting
Veg for: 16 years
What we ate for breakfast today: Waffles with peanut butter and maple syrup
Our current go-to vegan cookbook: *Thug Kitchen: Eat Like You Give a F*ck*
Our favorite Thanksgiving dish: Sourdough stuffing with green apples, vegan sausage, and chestnuts
Our must-have holiday dessert: Pecan pie with coconut whipped cream

2 Marla Rose
Bittersweet, p.34

Where I'm from: Chicago
What I do: Freelance write and run veganstreet.com with my husband
Veg for: 33 years
Kitchen tool I can't live without: My chef's knife
I can't wait to dine at: Vedge in Philadelphia
My favorite Thanksgiving dish: Brussels sprouts sliders with caramelized onions
My must-have holiday dessert: Our annual holiday bark with toasted pecans, dried cranberries, and mini marshmallows

3 Jackie Sobon
Cookie Party, p.58

Where I'm from: Los Alamitos, CA
What I do: Food photographer and cookbook author
Veg for: Five years
What I ate for breakfast today: Smoky collard greens, chickpea cutlets, and chipotle ranch dressing
My current go-to vegan cookbook: *The Complete Guide to Even More Vegan Substitutions*
My favorite Thanksgiving dish: Bread stuffing
My must-have holiday dessert: Pumpkin pie ice cream

4 Jasmin Singer
Crazy for Chloe, p.64

Where I'm from: New York City
What I do: Manage Our Hen House, write, and host a weekly podcast
Veg for: 18 years
What I ate for breakfast today: A good, old-fashioned green smoothie
My current go-to vegan cookbook: *Eat Like You Give a Damn*
My favorite Thanksgiving dish: Sweet potatoes with vegan marshmallows
How I like my vegan egg nog: Mixing various store-bought brands for the perfect consistency!

Jasmine Singer: © Derek Goodwin Photography

VegNews

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Sweet Eats **Jackie Sobon**
VegAdvice **Marla Rose**
Veganize It! **Brian L. Patton**
VegNutrition **Julieanna Hever**

November+December Contributors

Hannah Anderson, Kate Lewis, Erin Miller, Lucas M. Peters, Marla Rose, Jasmin Singer, Tracey Stewart, Erin Wysocarski

What's your favorite holiday tradition?

Jenn
"Making the VegNews recipe for two-cheese lasagna—it's a hit every year!"

Nick
"Savoring a Wellington from Native Foods Café for Thanksgiving dinner"

Natalie
"Eating vegan tamales at Christmas"

Marla
"Building a vegan gingerbread house and slowly devouring it"

Heather & Jenny
"Adopting a turkey from Farm Sanctuary in honor of our students each year"

Kate
"Instagramming my Vegan Thanksgiving Leftover Tower of Power sandwich every year!"

The Fine Print

VegNews accepts articles for publication. Publication of an article does not necessarily reflect the official position of Fresh Healthy Media, LLC.

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VN READERS SHARE WHAT'S ON THEIR MINDS

READER LOVE

I just received your newest edition of VegNews, and I want you to know it's out of this world! Congratulations on a superlative, sensational job. Your magazine is a major impetus for the global proliferation of veganism; you are saving millions of animals and prolonging millions of human lives with the information in your magazine. I and so many others not only appreciate what this magazine is doing, but how its content is transforming the consciousness of humankind.

Neal Grace SAN RAFAEL, CA

I was so excited to receive VegNews in my mailbox! The articles and photos are amazing, and I am reading and savoring every page. I especially loved the Publisher's Note—it was very heartfelt, and please know how much we appreciate you.

Rachel Kruse MILWAUKEE, WI

Came home to find my issue of VegNews in the mail, and it made my day! Thanks to all of you who pulled it together. The issue is stellar and filled with so much love.

Amy Hall FREEVILLE, NY

DIVERSITY, PLEASE

I remember the first time you included the wedding of a same-sex couple … I was thrilled! I felt proud that my gay and lesbian brothers and sisters could be seen as "out" not only in their sexuality but also their veganism. So you can understand that I might expect to again feel seen, and celebrated, as a gay woman in the magazine after the Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality. I am sure I am not the only queer vegan who feels this way. It is my hope that you will revisit marriage equality in future issues, as I'm sure it will only further your reach.

Marcella Kerbein OAKLAND, CA

Editor's note: *We strive to cover a wide range of weddings in our annual wedding feature and invite all couples to apply at vegnews.com/weddings.*

First of all, I'm so glad to have VegNews back. I've been a subscriber for so long, and being without it these many months has been a bit sad! In your new and exciting incarnation, I wonder if you could put more focus on something I've long noticed missing from the magazine: diversity. There have been so few non-white cover ladies or gentlemen, so few writers of color, so few articles highlighting the incredible work and veganism of the thousands of brilliant, influential non-white vegans out there. Having a diversity of faces on the cover and at least one article about someone of color and at least one writer of color would help dispel the myth about veganism being a white movement. Thanks again for all the wonderful work you do.

Gretchen Primack HURLEY, NY

Editor's note: *We always welcome story ideas from both readers and writers. Please email us at tips@vegnews.com with all your great ideas!*

MORE LOVE FOR VEGNEWS …

The wait was really worth it—I even get good vibes in my hands from holding it. Much love to you and many thanks …

Tuerca Caso

I just screamed out loud when my hubby threw VegNews to me. So glad to have you back.

@jeabaja

Just got my issue of VegNews in the mail! Time to curl up on the couch.

@TonjaVernazza

I got my fix in the mail today—happy dance!

Francis Janes

My first VegNews issue—my husband and I are in love!!!! Thanks for such an amazing magazine and resource!

@TheGardenGrazer

We'd love to hear from you! Letters may be sent to letters@vegnews.com.

PLANTS **OVER** PILLS

A groundbreaking new vegan medical center is opening in Washington, DC, advocating plant-based nutrition and prevention rather than post-diagnostic care.

The Barnard Medical Center has an **entire roster of medical professionals on staff**, including a family physician, an internal medicine physician, a medical director, and registered dieticians.

An **emphasis is placed on food and lifestyle, not pills**, for combating degenerative diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

Nutrition-education classes teach patients basic food science and feature hands-on cooking demonstrations.

Consultations are scheduled for new patients to **customize a plan** for addressing health challenges.

Grocery store tours are offered to assist patients interested in learning how to shop for healthy, plant-based food.

The center hopes to lay the foundation for **others to follow suit** across the country.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than half of American adults suffer from chronic ailments such as arthritis, stroke, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. These conditions account for 86 percent of the country's health-care spending, an astronomical figure considering that many of these illnesses can be prevented with better food choices through a proper diet and healthy living practices. Founded and directed by Dr. Neal Barnard—president of Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine—the Barnard Medical Center in Washington, DC is the first of its kind to focus on plant-based nutrition and prevention through food choices rather than post-diagnostic care. This method of treating patients, Barnard says, "dramatically reduces the risk that these conditions will occur and can greatly improve them after they've struck." As if having good health isn't enough incentive to adopt a meat-free lifestyle, Barnard also says that switching to a plant-based diet can save money for patients with—or without—chronic illnesses.

$300 million

The amount Google reportedly offered to buy plant-based meat and cheese producer Impossible Foods, a figure the vegan company rejected.

38%

The number of consumers 35 years old and younger looking for dairy-free pizza options when dining out.

AFTER TWO DECADES RAISING GOATS, The Sanctuary at Soledad in Mojave, CA has ceased its goat cheese production in favor of creating cruelty-free cashew cheese. Owners Carol and Julian Pearce made the shift in July and have also transformed their former goat farm into a non-profit rescue organization housing goats, chickens, and sheep.

GOT HUMMUS?

The chickpea dip, a beloved source of protein for vegetarians everywhere, was recently named "creamy, dreamy dish of the year" by *Bon Appétit*, a departure from the magazine's normal meat-centric selections.

1 million

The number of guests served at vegan restaurant chain Veggie Grill in the past 90 days.

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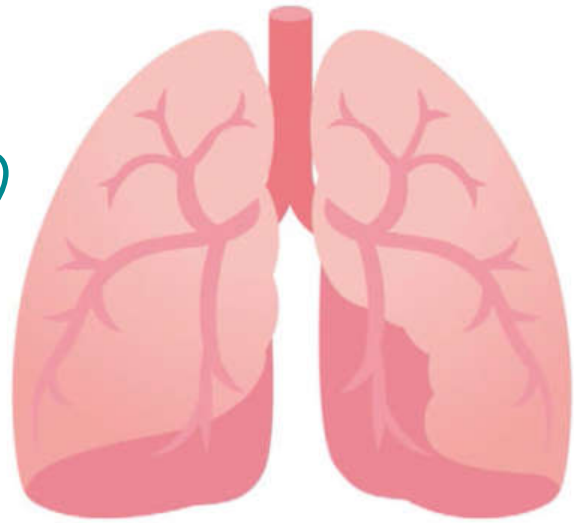
A ROAST FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health found that a diet high in fruit and vegetables has the potential to help combat the effects of certain forms of breast cancer. Led by Vincent Cryns, the study explains how plant-based diets can fight tumor cells fueled by methionine, an amino acid commonly found in meat and fish. This same amino acid was discovered to be low in fruit and vegetables. The findings, Cryns says, are the first step to discovering whether or not a low-methionine diet can improve survival rates for diagnosed women.

71%

The percentage of asthmatics whose symptoms improved after switching to a vegan diet for four months. The statistic increased to 92 percent after one year.



"Almost all studies of fish oil supplements show no benefit."

—Former American Heart Association president Robert Eckel on the lack of evidence to support the usage of fish-based omega-3 supplements.

Want to enjoy good food and prevent weight gain?

According to a recent study, the answer is to eat sesame and flaxseeds. Researchers followed 1,000 women for a decade and discovered that having a higher level of lignans—chemical compounds found in high levels in sesame and flax—slowed or prevented weight gain over time. Although prevalent in a variety of plant-based foods, flax and sesame seeds are especially rich in the compound.

Holiday Shopping? We've Got You Covered!

Whether you're looking for great gift ideas, special dessert ingredients, or the main dish for a festive celebration, **VeganEssentials.com** has what you need for the holidays! Our huge selection of **all-vegan products** is ready to ship, plus our competitive prices and knowledgeable staff will help you check everything off your wish list.

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wafers + cookies (yum!)

dog treats (woof!)

candy boxes (drool!)

savory stuff (delish!)

vegan tees (and more!)

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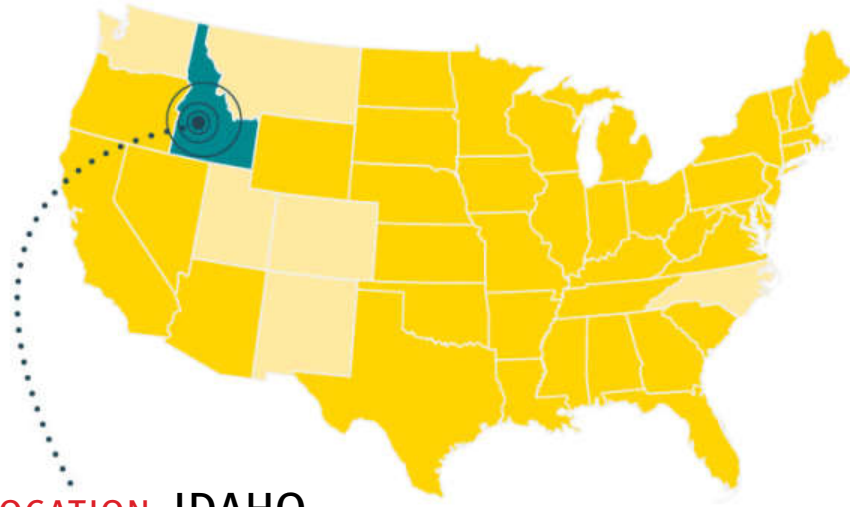
> The people of Japan are taking whale meat off the menu. This is great news for whales, and one of the clearest signals yet that the whaling industry is in its death throes.
>
> —PATRICK RAMAGE, DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE'S GLOBAL WHALE PROGRAM.

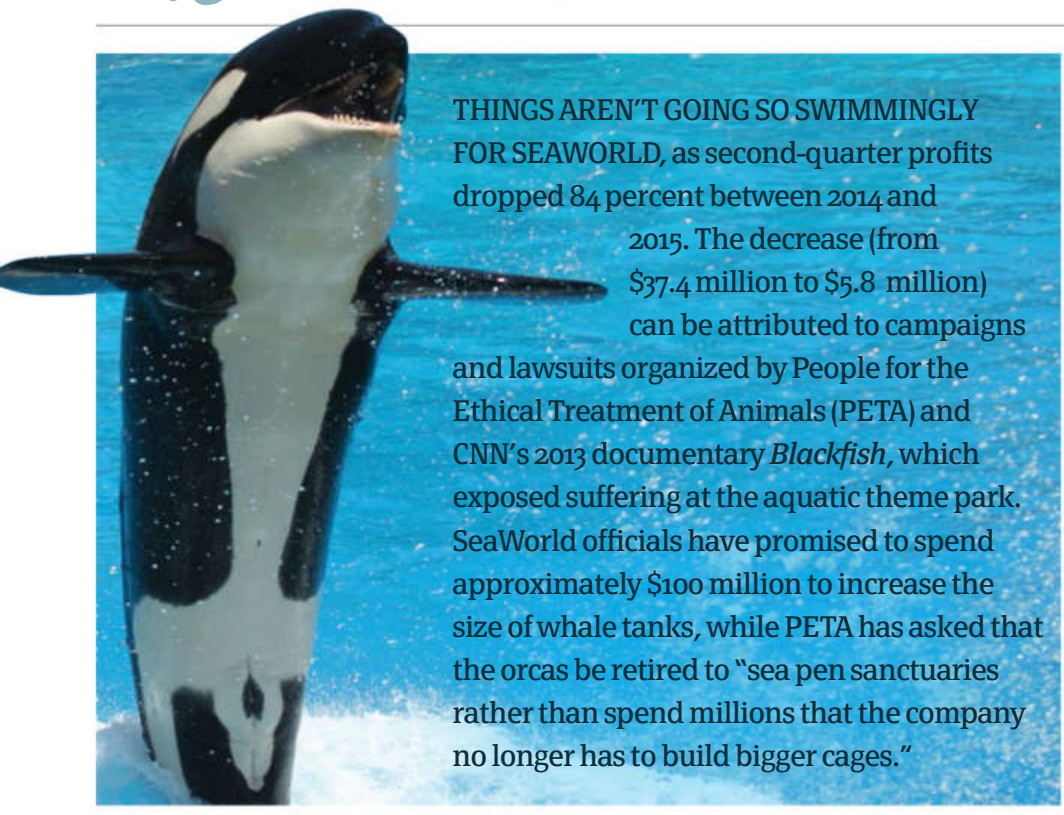
500

The number of Duplin County, NC residents suing pork giant Smithfield Farms, claiming cesspools of pig feces and urine from the nearby factory farm have devalued their properties and disrupted their lives.



LOCATION: IDAHO

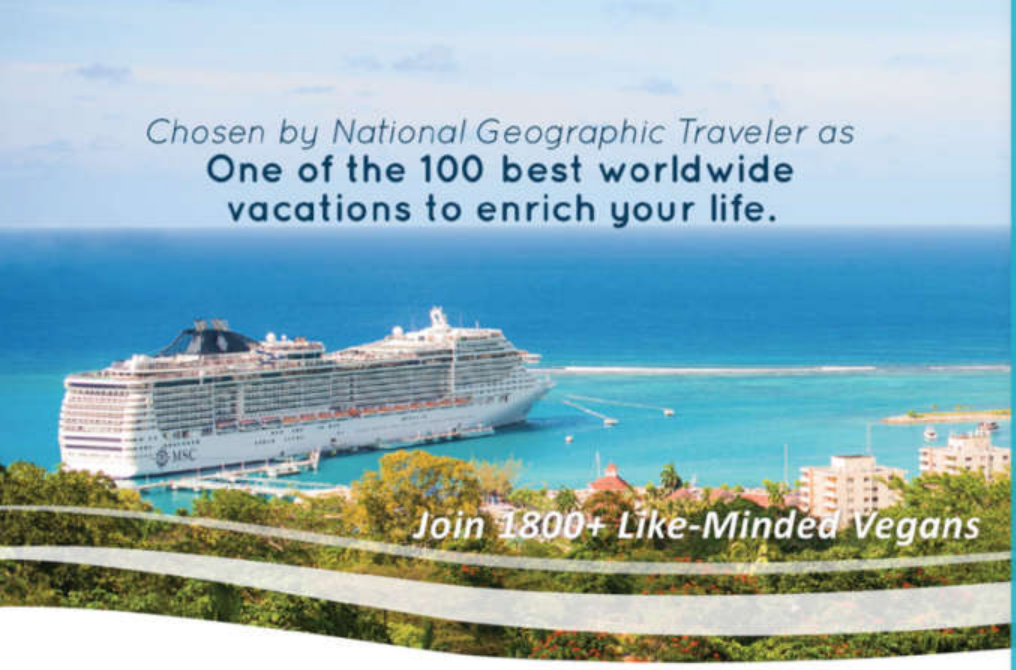
A recent ruling by the US District Court for the District of Idaho overturned the state's 2014 ag-gag law, finding that the statute violated the First Amendment by suppressing free speech. The court also ruled that the law violated the Equal Protection clause of the 14th Amendment by discriminating against animal advocates. Ag-gag laws—currently active in Washington, New Mexico, Utah, North Carolina, Colorado, and Montana—make it illegal for animal-rights activists, employees, and journalists to document injustices on factory farms. This decision marks the first time an ag-gag law has been overturned.



THINGS AREN'T GOING SO SWIMMINGLY FOR SEAWORLD, as second-quarter profits dropped 84 percent between 2014 and 2015. The decrease (from $37.4 million to $5.8 million) can be attributed to campaigns and lawsuits organized by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and CNN's 2013 documentary *Blackfish*, which exposed suffering at the aquatic theme park. SeaWorld officials have promised to spend approximately $100 million to increase the size of whale tanks, while PETA has asked that the orcas be retired to "sea pen sanctuaries rather than spend millions that the company no longer has to build bigger cages."

100%

The percentage of ground beef found to contain fecal contamination by a *Consumer Reports* investigation. In addition, more than 80 percent of samples—from both conventional and "sustainable" varieties at 103 grocery, big-box, and natural-food stores in 26 cities across the US—contained at least two types of bacteria.



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T. COLIN CAMPBELL, PH.D.

Physician, author, & internationally-recognized speaker on nutrition; founded NutritionFacts.org; spoke at Congress, on *Dr. Oz*, & the *Colbert Report*

MICHAEL GREGER, M.D.

Founder of the Physicians Commitee for Responsible Medicine; author of *Food for Life* & *Power Foods for the Brain*; active health advocate

NEAL BARNARD, M.D.

Long-time radio host, acclaimed physician and health educator; practices nutritionally-based medicine at True North Health Center

MICHAEL KLAPER, M.D.

Author of cookbook *At Home in the Whole Food Kitchen*; her cuisine appears in *Martha Stewart Living*, *Vogue*, *the Guardian*, *Oprah* & *Vegetarian Times*

AMY CHAPLIN

Chef & author of *Unprocessed: How to Achieve Vibrant Health and Your Ideal Weight*, inspiring public speaker & cooking instructor

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buzznow

SEE / READ / DO

November December

1 It's **World Vegan Day**, which means you have a hall pass to eat that extra slice of dairy-free chocolate cake.

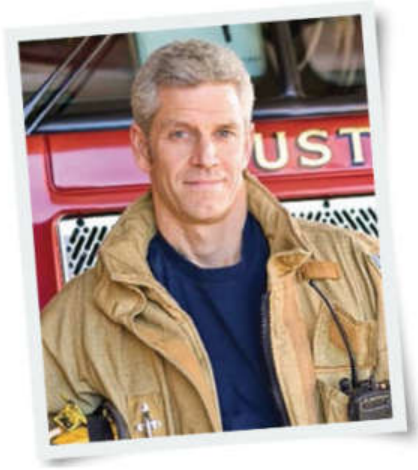
5 Bust out your cotton kilt for **VegFest Scotland**, primed to be Europe's biggest vegan festival.

8 After eating our Death by (Vegan) Chocolate brownies (see vegnews.com for recipe), we're kind of upset that we didn't invent **National Brownie Day**.

13 Join host **Ali Wentworth** for a cocktail hour, gourmet vegan dinner, live entertainment, and auction at the Humane Society of the United States' To the Rescue gala in New York City.

14 With only 24 hours to celebrate **Spicy Guacamole Day**, you best believe we're setting our alarms and stocking our kitchens with cayenne, jalapeños, and sriracha.

21 The weekend-long 2 Forks Food Conference in Pasadena, CA—hosted by author **Rip Esselstyn**—includes demonstrations, nutrition lectures, and a cooking competition moderated by FoodyTV.com's Chef AJ.



26 You're going to eat too much today, so begin your morning with a five-kilometer walk/run at the **Tofurky Trot** in Portland, OR or Pasadena, CA.

25 We hear it's some other day today, but for us, December 25 means **National Pumpkin Pie Day**.

26 He sings, he acts, he's dreamy, and he's vegan, so let's start a petition to designate **Jared Leto**'s birthday as a national holiday.

31 Who has a glass of Champagne in one hand while counting down with Ryan Seacrest? We do, that's who. **Happy New Year!**

Rip Esselstyn: Courtesy of Engine 2 Diet; Ali Wentworth: Courtesy of Ali Wentworth; Pumpkin pie: Allyson Kramer; Jared Leto: Samantha Stott Photography

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lightly sweetened
CALIFIA FARMS
HOLIDAY
Nog
ALMONDMILK
DAIRY FREE
CARRAGEENAN FREE • SOY FREE
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BPA FREE
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nongmoproject.org

VEGGIE AWARDS 2015

IN 2015, VEGANISM HAS SKYROCKETED IN A WAY WE ALWAYS KNEW POSSIBLE. From celebrity endorsements (Moby! Pamela! Russell!) to meat-free restaurants opening in cities best known for steakhouses to the spectacular rise of artisanal vegan cheese, how could it not? And judging by the 1.3 million votes received in this year's Veggie Awards reader poll (a VegNews record), we'd say you agree. It's been a busy 12 months for the veg world, and we can hardly wait to see what 2016 brings. In the meantime, we give you the best of the best of all-things veg ...

PERSON OF THE YEAR

MOBY

"VEGAN ACTIVISM, ANIMAL-WELFARE ACTIVISM … THAT'S MY LIFE'S WORK. I CARE ABOUT OTHER THINGS, BUT NOTHING IN ANY WAY COMPARES TO THE EXTENT TO WHICH I CARE ABOUT ANIMAL WELFARE."

Labeling Moby as nothing more than a musician isn't just unfair—it's inaccurate. The 50-year-old is best-known as the artist responsible for 12 full-length albums and nearly 100 singles, but it's his work in the animal-advocacy community that we've loved for years. Vegan since 1987, the man born Richard Melville Hall has made headlines recently for his outspoken views on animal agriculture's negative influence on California's drought. Furthermore, in October, he opened a restaurant in Los Angeles called Little Pine and frequently makes financial donations to numerous animal-rights organizations. He tweets regularly about veganism and cruelty-free living, has an impressive vocabulary, and just performed an amazing DJ set on Halloween. This hyper-busy artist found time to speak to VegNews about his veganism and why fighting for animals is his "life's work."

VegNews: When did you become vegan?

Moby: I became a vegetarian in 1984 and then became a vegan in '87. I've never been interested in eating non-vegan food—I did it for ethical reasons but also because I only really like vegan food. I have a lot of friends who are tempted by cheese or sushi or bacon, but the thought of eating cheese or sushi or bacon repulses me. It's been such a long time now that animal products don't even register as food.

VN: How did you become vocal about your beliefs?

Moby: My family was very progressive and very politically active. In the late '70s and early '80s, I got involved in the punk rock world and the hardcore world, which was also very progressive and politically active. I've always thought one of the only good uses of a life is to try to be an effective advocate for the things you believe in. Then the goal is figuring out how to be effective. Like many people, I had my period in the late '80s and early '90s of breaking windows at fur shops, throwing fake blood on things, and yelling at people. Eventually, I realized the more I yelled at people the less they listened. And the more fake blood I threw, the less people respected me and the cause I was representing. Deep down, we all just want to yell, especially when confronted with the enormity of the problem, but ultimately that just makes people turn away and close their ears. People listen to the substance of the message if they're able to get past the tone of the message. If the tone of the message is too strident or too didactic or too loud, people won't pay attention to the substance of it.

VN: Do you feel any sort of hypocrisy among other political movements that don't promote veganism and animal welfare?

Moby: It's frustrating. The fact that almost no environmental group is vegan is so absurd when you look at climate change, water pollution, water use, deforestation, famine ... I asked Al Gore, "Why, in *An Inconvenient Truth*, the book and the movie, do you not mention animal agriculture?" He looked at me and said, "That's just too inconvenient of a truth for most people." Inconvenient truths might be inconvenient, but they're still true. The truth of animal agriculture is inescapable. There really isn't another option, and politicians, consumers, and corporations have to accept that the fact they grew up eating meat is not a justification for killing tens of billions of animals a year and destroying the climate. It's not even anecdote or opinion anymore. It's simple fact.

VN: You've donated money to numerous organizations that operate undercover investigations. Why do you support them?

Moby: Undercover investigators are the most heroic people in our movement, and that's why I do everything I can to support them. The ag-gag laws offend me as a vegan animal-rights activist, but they also offend me as an American because they're so clearly unconstitutional. They will be overturned—that's just a given. The problem is, once they're overturned, there are no consequences for the people who drafted them in the first place. The legislators and lobbyists who got these terrible ag-gag pieces of legislation passed should all go to jail once it's proven that they're unconstitutional.

Moby is a vocal supporter of many animal-welfare organizations.

VN: Tell us about your work with Courage Campaign and the California drought.

Moby: I tried to get a petition to the state legislature in California about water use because about a year ago, [Governor] Jerry Brown was talking about the drought and agriculture as if it was one thing. He was comparing the water use involved in growing broccoli to the water use involved in growing alfalfa or raising cattle. Agriculture takes many forms, and to me, saying growing broccoli is on par with raising beef was so misleading and offensive. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and the *LA Times* were drafting editorials saying California shouldn't be using water for water-intensive agriculture. So that's what I was saying. I said, in California there shouldn't be cotton, alfalfa, beef, and pork to make it more of a water issue than a vegan issue, but the non-animal activist community wasn't that interested because they all like beef, chicken, and pork, so they turn a blind eye to anything that keeps them from going to In-N-Out Burger. I found that a lot of people could get worked up over water for golf courses, but not that worked up about the 40 percent of California's water that goes to water-intensive agriculture like beef and alfalfa.

VN: Do you ever get the "shut up and play" line from people?

Moby: Oh yeah, and I immediately ignore them. I truly don't care. The only thing I care about is being an effective advocate for animals, so if me being outspoken about my veganism turns some people off, the only reason that would matter to me is if that makes me less of an effective activist. A couple years ago I posted something about farmed animal welfare and got one of those responses like "just shut up and play music," and I said, "Or what? You're not going to buy my albums that you're already not buying? You're not coming to my concert that you're already not coming to?" My response is simply ignore them and get on with the work. Vegan activism, animal-welfare activism ... that's my life's work. I care about other things, but nothing in any way compares to the extent to which I care about animal welfare.

Opposite page photo: courtesy of Moby; photo this page: courtesy of Mercy For Animals

PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

MIYOKO'S CREAMERY

Thanks to MIYOKO'S CREAMERY, we can just stop with that whole "vegan cheese isn't as good as the real thing" argument we've been hearing for years. With flavors ranging from Double Cream Sundried Tomato Garlic to Aged English Sharp Farmhouse, this independently-owned Northern California company has proven that plant-based cheese is as delicious and legitimate as any of its dairy-based counterparts. By using traditional cheese-making techniques, company founder Miyoko Schinner has perfected the art of nut-based culturing, recreating the cheeses she loved before going vegan more than three decades ago. The recent addition of buffalo-style mozzarella quickly became the company's best-seller thanks in part to its versatility (it's great in a Caprese salad or melted on pizzas), while a soon-to-be-launched cheese club will allow members first dibs on new items, specials, and regular shipments of cheese. We've been loving Schinner's delectable creations ever since her 2012 *Artisan Vegan Cheese* cookbook, but having these treats arrive at your door makes them taste even better.

Photo: © Tim Porter 2013

COMPANY OF THE YEAR
FIELD ROAST

2015 is the year FIELD ROAST elevated itself from a favorite among vegetarians everywhere to worldwide mainstream attention. For starters, the Seattle-based company reintroduced its products to Canada after a well-publicized battle regarding the labels on its packaging. Field Roast was also the vegan meat alternative of choice at 10 national stadiums (including Levi's Stadium, Safeco Field, Petco Park, and Camden Yards) where fans could chow down on vegan burgers and frankfurters while rooting for the home team. There was continued production of its wildly popular grain meats (Apple Maple Breakfast Sausage, Celebration Roast, and Hazelnut Cranberry Roast En Croute, to name a few), and then there was that cheese. Rather than duplicate traditional flavors, Field Roast wowed us with the mind-blowing Chao Slices cheese line. Coconut-based varieties such as Tomato Cayenne with Spicy Peppers, Coconut Herb with Black Pepper, and Creamy Original with Chao Tofu are reinventing sliced cheese in a way we never thought possible. Add those things together, folks, and you've got yourself a Company of the Year.

RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR
MODERN LOVE OMAHA

Modern Love Omaha: courtesy of the restaurant

Not just anyone could open the first vegan restaurant in a city best known for its steaks. Then again, Isa Chandra Moskowitz isn't just anyone. The beloved cookbook author opened **MODERN LOVE OMAHA** in August 2014 and instantly redefined vegan comfort food with a 34-seat eatery that is chic yet relaxed and affordable. The Mac & Shews, Kale Caesar Salad, and housemade gnocchi are on par with the country's finest vegan cuisine, but equally important is the impact Modern Love is having on the region. By creating a world-class veg eatery in the heartland, Moskowitz is proving that veganism can succeed in unlikely places when the food is simply too good for locals to ignore. Also not to ignore is the Modern Sundae, so save room after dinner, because when your friendly tattooed server asks if you want dessert, you're going to want to say yes. Made with two scoops of homemade ice cream, salted maple caramel fudge sauce, pistachio dust, coconut whip, and a toasted marshmallow topped with a cherry, this mouthwatering dish exemplifies Modern Love's innovation and attention to detail. Be on the lookout for a second Modern Love opening in Brooklyn in 2016.

READER POLL FAVES
CHOW

FAVORITE ICE CREAM
COCONUT BLISS

FAVORITE COOKIE
ENJOY LIFE

FAVORITE CHOCOLATE
ENDANGERED SPECIES CHOCOLATE

FAVORITE MILK
ALMOND MILK

FAVORITE MILK BRAND
ALMOND BREEZE

FAVORITE MEAT
GARDEIN

FAVORITE TOFU
NASOYA

FAVORITE STAPLE CHEESE
DAIYA

FAVORITE ARTISANAL CHEESE
MIYOKO'S CREAMERY

FAVORITE ENERGY BAR
LÄRABAR

FAVORITE SNACK FOOD
EARTH BALANCE VEGAN CHEDDAR FLAVOR SQUARES

FAVORITE CANDY
JUSTIN'S DARK CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER CUPS

FAVORITE CONDIMENT
VEGENAISE

FAVORITE FRESH JUICE
NAKED JUICE

FAVORITE PROTEIN POWDER
YUVE VEGAN NUTRITIONAL SHAKE

STYLE

FAVORITE HAIR CARE
AVEDA

FAVORITE MAKEUP
URBAN DECAY

GO

FAVORITE FINE DINING RESTAURANT
CANDLE 79
(NEW YORK CITY)

FAVORITE CASUAL RESTAURANT
GRACIAS MADRE
(LOS ANGELES + SAN FRANCISCO)

FAVORITE VEGAN CHAIN
NATIVE FOODS CAFÉ
(NATIONWIDE)

FAVORITE BAKERY
STICKY FINGERS
(WASHINGTON, DC)

FAVORITE ONLINE BAKERY
ALLISON'S GOURMET

FAVORITE STORE
MOOSHOES (NEW YORK + LOS ANGELES)

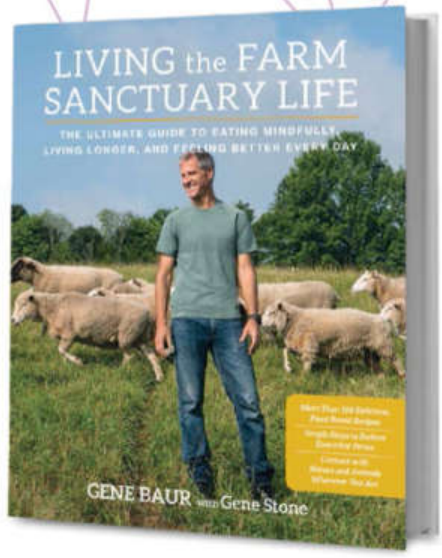
FAVORITE ONLINE STORE
VEGAN ESSENTIALS

FAVORITE VEG-FRIENDLY CITY
PORTLAND, OR

FAVORITE ANIMAL SANCTUARY
FARM SANCTUARY
(NEW YORK + CALIFORNIA)

BOOK OF THE YEAR

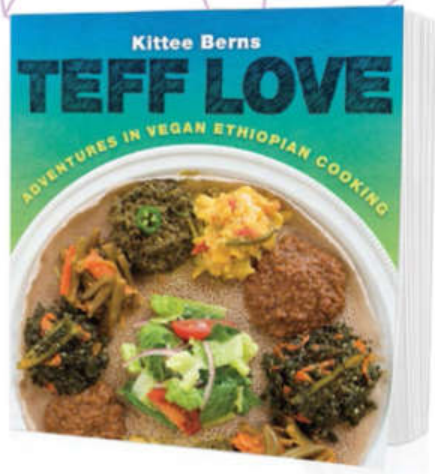
LIVING THE FARM SANCTUARY LIFE



If you know anything about Gene Baur, then it comes as no surprise that his second book, **LIVING THE FARM SANCTUARY LIFE** (with Gene Stone of *Forks Over Knives*), is just as amazing as he is. A 30-year vegan, Baur is an animal-rights icon who in 1986 co-founded Farm Sanctuary to advocate for farmed animals through policy, protection, rescue, and education. These are just a few of the reasons why this year he's been featured on *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, was the subject of a *TIME* magazine interview, took to popular website Reddit for a Q&A session, and was profiled four times on The Huffington Post. His latest book is presented as a practical and effective way to approach veganism and bridges the gap between longtime herbivores and the veg-curious. Divided into two parts, *Living the Farm Sanctuary Life* first educates readers on the history of Farm Sanctuary and the five tenets of Farm Sanctuary Life (guidelines that help people live the best lives possible) before providing tips for a vegan kitchen with a slew of delicious veg recipes. Throw in beautiful images of rescued animals, and you'll understand why we've chosen this read as our Book of the Year.

COOKBOOK OF THE YEAR

TEFF LOVE



We love Ethiopian food. The problem is, we're not very good at cooking it ourselves. That's where Kittee Berns and her book **TEFF LOVE** come in, helping to make the African cuisine more accessible for our amateur cooking skills. Filled with practical recipes suitable for even the most basic home chefs, Berns demystifies spices by explaining what they are (and how to blend them), while giving simple tutorials on the necessary tools and substitutions to make an at-home vegan Ethiopian spread. A gorgeous cover featuring mounds of stewed red lentils, bright yellow cabbage, and a crisp salad on spongy injera entices you to pick up the book, but it's the "foundations" explaining the preparation behind stocks and sauces that'll give you the confidence to cook Ethiopian food like a pro. With this knowledge, incorporating familiar ingredients such as kale, eggplant, and potatoes into Ethiopian staples feels like we've been making this delicious cuisine our entire lives.

While she never really went away, in 2015 **PAMELA ANDERSON** has taken her vegan activism to new heights. This year, the television and movie actress stripped for an Alfred Hitchcock-inspired shower scene for PETA's campaign to tie California's drought to animal agriculture. She also visited Arizona's Maricopa County Jail to promote the region's first meatless meal program, saying, "I believe people can be rehabilitated from the inside out" and that "jails are full of people wanting to change, to make amends, to learn healthier habits, and understand compassion and empathy." Also this year, Anderson launched web-based cooking show "The Sensual Vegan" to teach viewers how to create simple vegan dishes such as white bean salad and fragrant lentil stew. As if those weren't enough, Anderson has teamed up with French designer Amélie Pichard for a new line of vegan bags and shoes coming out this December. While her on-camera lifeguarding days may be behind her, her real-world efforts to save lives seem to be rolling full speed ahead.

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR

PAMELA ANDERSON

Pamela Anderson photo: Terry George

Ellie Laks, founder of **THE GENTLE BARN**, doesn't just believe the journey to a peaceful world involves rubbing pig's bellies, hugging chickens, and cuddling turkeys—she lives it. Since 1999, she and co-founder/husband Jay Weiner have rescued, rehabilitated, and provided life-long sanctuary to more than 170 animals on their Santa Clarita, CA farm. State-of-the-art treatments for injured animals include acupuncture, massages, and prosthetics, while all animals dine on vegetables and superfoods such as quinoa, lentils, and beans. The sanctuary offers educational programs for students and at-risk youth, and hosts events such as the annual Gentle Thanksgiving—taking place November 26—at which 250 visitors feed vegan pie to rescued turkeys. To celebrate its 16th anniversary this year, The Gentle Barn opened a second sanctuary in Knoxville, TN that hosted a vegan wedding within its first month of operation. Laks and Weiner's goal is to open Gentle Barns in all 50 states, which would make us—and a whole lot of animals—very happy.

NON-PROFIT OF THE YEAR

THE GENTLE BARN

PEOPLE & MEDIA

READER POLL FAVES

FAVORITE CELEBRITY
ELLEN DEGENERES

FAVORITE COOKBOOK
EAT LIKE YOU GIVE A DAMN

FAVORITE WEBSITE
HAPPYCOW.NET

FAVORITE BLOG
OH SHE GLOWS

FAVORITE ANIMAL ORGANIZATION
FARM SANCTUARY

FAVORITE VEGAN ORGANIZATION
PHYSICIANS COMMITTEE FOR RESPONSIBLE MEDICINE (PCRM)

PARTY OF THE YEAR

BOOZE INVASION

What's better than a vegan food festival? A vegan food festival with alcohol, of course, which is why 2015 will go down as **THE YEAR OF THE VEGAN BOOZE GATHERING**. And with a combined 15,000 attendees at the Los Angeles Vegan Beer & Food Festival, the Portland Vegan Beer & Food Festival, New York's Better Booze Festival, Los Angeles' Vegan Oktoberfest, and the San Francisco Vegan Super Bowl Party, how could it not? On-site pours allowed drinkers to sample an array of veg IPAs, stouts, lagers, and ales, while German-style soft pretzels, fried Brussels sprouts with pesto aioli, and banana-beer cupcakes almost made us forget about the beer. Almost.

ROOKIE ACTIVIST OF THE YEAR

RENEE KING-SONNEN

Rowdy Girl Veganic Farm and Sanctuary is named after founder **RENEE KING-SONNEN**'s energetic cow Rowdy Girl, but from King-Sonnen's actions you might think she named it after herself. Within months of moving to a ranch in Angleton, TX with husband Tommy, the tireless environmentalist adopted a vegan diet and began feeling uncomfortable with the sale and slaughter of her partner's cows. With the ultimatum that Tommy save the cows or get divorced, King-Sonnen used online crowdfunding sites Indiegogo and Barnraise to save the cows and establish the 96-acre sanctuary. Her husband, now vegan, happily helps with the farm, while King-Sonnen continues to take the veg world by storm. She's featured alongside other impactful advocates such as Russell Simmons, Ed Begley, Jr., and Gene Baur in the 2016 documentary *Vegan: Everyday Stories*, and has a reality show in development about the rescue of animals (otherwise bound for slaughter) on a Texas cattle ranch.

INNOVATION OF THE YEAR

CHICKPEA MERINGUE

We used to think of CHICKPEAS as nothing more than the base for hummus, the main ingredient of chana masala, and what we sprinkle on salads for extra protein, but this year the mighty bean has miraculously found its way into the most unexpected of places: dessert. In 2015, the vegan world was blessed when two men on opposite sides of the globe—French tenor singer Joël Roessel and American software engineer Goose Wohlt—discovered that chickpea brine, which mimics the structure of egg whites, can be whipped into goodies such as meringue and marshmallow fluff. Coined "aquafaba" (the word combines the Latin terms for "water" and "bean") by Wohlt, this monumental breakthrough means formerly unattainable sweets such as lemon meringue pie, baked Alaska, and delicate Pavlovas are now as easy as opening a can of chickpeas, separating the liquid, and whipping into myriad dessert possibilities. Turning trash into treasure has never tasted so good.

Chickpea photo: Olives for Dinner

POLITICIAN OF THE YEAR
CORY BOOKER

US Senator CORY BOOKER is a real-life Superman. He helped New Jersey residents during a blizzard, invited citizens into his home during Hurricane Sandy, and saved a woman from a burning building. Booker also happens to be vegan, a graduate of Stanford, Oxford, and Yale and, oh yeah, a Rhodes Scholar. The former Newark, NJ mayor went vegan in late 2014 after two decades of being vegetarian, saying, "While some people might think trying to be vegan would make your life more complicated, it's actually making my life more simple and cleaner." Furthermore, Booker has become one of today's most important advocates for animal rights, introducing legislation to update the Animal Welfare Act and pushing for language in a chemical-testing bill to reduce or eliminate animal testing. In addition to saving the world through politics, his tomato-based chutney won first place last summer in the Congressional Veggie Burger Smackdown in Washington, DC. As if that wasn't enough, the popular politician takes to Twitter and Facebook to discuss the plant-based dishes he eats, the negative effects of meat, and the benefits of animal adoption. All of these accomplishments have us wondering: when does this man sleep?

OBSESSION OF THE YEAR
PEANUT BUTTER CUPS

Just because you're vegan doesn't mean you don't pine for the delicious sweet-and-salty flavor combination found only in a **PEANUT BUTTER CUP**. Perfect for special occasions or simply when you need a sweet fix, stat, the classic treat has exploded across grocery store aisles this year thanks to an array of impressive varieties. For starters, if it's a throwback to your childhood you crave, there's Premium Chocolatiers' delectable Peanot Cups or Justin's brand-new Mini Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter Cups. Those who fancy themselves peanut butter aficionados might savor a sumptuous fair-trade, dark chocolate cup from online bakery Allison's Gourmet, while anyone who prefers the DIY route might try High Hopes Vegan Bakery on Etsy, where melt-in-your-mouth buttery discs are made by hand. If you're the type who just can't stop at one cup, there are health-conscious brands such as Unreal's Dark Chocolate Crispy Quinoa Peanut Butter Cup (which incorporates superfood grains), while Raw Revolution's Live Food Bar Almond Butter uses raw ingredients that make you feel better about eating three in one sitting. And, if you think peanut butter is best paired with another American classic—jelly—Missy J's PB+J Carob Cup combines the two for a snack that tastes like recess. We're obsessed with them all. VN

WINNERS

Drum roll, please!

With more than 1.3 million votes cast this year, these eight lucky readers scored big time. Congratulations to all of our 2015 prize winners!

Grand Prize
Vitamix Blender
A state-of-the-art, ultra-powerful blending machine
Roma Donahue

1st Prize
One-Year Supply of Coconut Bliss Ice Cream
A pint a week of our 2015 Veggie Award-winning ice cream
Emily Bradford

2nd Prize
Vegan Essentials $500 Shopping Spree
From chocolate to makeup to wallets, this one-stop vegan shopping site has it all
Mary Jude Weaver

3rd Prize
Miyoko's Kitchen Vegan Cheese Party
An artisanal vegan cheese soirée delivered to your door, wine included
Miriam Singh

Weekly Prizes
Allison's Gourmet Chocolate Fudge
A pound of rich, organic dark chocolate fudge
Alison Barnett
Angela Brown
Ernie Caswell
Theresa Hast
Ashley Voss

More Veggie Awards!

Stop by VegNews.com on December 1 for our complete list of runners-up plus a bonus Veggie Award!

Cory Booker photo: courtesy of Cory Booker; Peanut butter cups: courtesy of Allison's Gourmet

BITTER
SWEET

Child slavery and poor working conditions are just a few reasons consumers are questioning whether or not chocolate is right for their ethically based diets. VegNews writer **Marla Rose** investigates the bitter truth behind this cherished food.

Perhaps no single word in the English language evokes opulent luxury as much as "chocolate."

And rightfully so. The versatile sweet is connected to memories both precious and painful (ie, romantic dinners and break-ups), comforting us on cold nights in the form of hot cocoa while providing sentimental reminders of our childhoods whenever we get a whiff of a freshly-baked brownie. Chocolate transforms bad days into good nights, elevates great moments to the sublime, provides a toothsome diversion from the daily grind, and boosts us when we're feeling enervated. Like a parent, chocolate is there for us, shape-shifting to meet our needs. Whether pauper or aristocrat, we turn to chocolate to make this sometimes harsh world a bit more palatable.

With more than three million tons of chocolate produced each year worldwide and $98 billion in sales, the rich treat—in all its various permutations—has wedged its way into our cupboards, purses, and freezers. But for something that has been such an intimate and important part of so many lives, chocolate's origins, history, and its present-day status are cloaked in controversy. Cocoa trees can grow only in a limited geographic range approximately 20 degrees to the north and south of the equator, and were originally planted by Europeans in the West Indies and the Philippines, as well as Asia and the Gold Coast of West Africa (specifically in Ghana and Ivory Coast). Ironically, though, most laborers in the West African cocoa industry have never tasted the finished product because this everyday delicacy is still out of reach for much of the world, including those who toil to produce it.

The bitter truth

More than 70 percent of the world's cocoa originates in Western Africa, where many laborers in the industry perform what is described as "hazardous work"—clearing land; working long hours; handling agricultural chemicals in the form of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides without adequate protection; carrying heavy loads;

and using dangerous instruments such as machetes to cut cocoa pods from the trees they've climbed—are children from Ivory Coast and Ghana working to help support their families. The most fortunate are able to live at home, but there are also those who have been brought in from impoverished neighboring countries such as Burkina Faso and Mali, their destitute families having been deceived by traffickers into believing they'd be cared for and would earn a decent wage on cocoa plantations. Other children are abducted outright by traffickers and may never see their loved ones again.

According to a Tulane University report, approximately 2.6 million children between the ages of five and 17 are laboring on cocoa plantations in Ivory Coast and Ghana. As Abby McGill, director of campaigns at the International Labor Rights Forum, a Washington, DC–based organization that has been working on bringing this issue to the public for more than a decade, puts it, "War, poverty, and disease work together to make a desperate and mobile population."

Furthermore, our collective hunger for inexpensive chocolate is growing as countries throughout the world are developing a taste for the delectable indulgence. This chocolate expansion means big dollars for corporations, but for West African children exploited by the cocoa industry, this development only furthers their lack of education, low wages, and daily exposure to hazardous conditions, abuse, and arduous labor. Quite literally, these children will continue to struggle beneath the 100-pound sacks they carry so we can enjoy a soon-forgotten chocolate ice cream cone.

Chocolate & veganism

For Lauren Ornelas, a longtime social-justice activist and founder of the Food Empowerment Project (FEP)—an organization working to create a more just and sustainable world by recognizing the power of one's food choices—learning about the less appetizing side of the cocoa industry meant she could no longer ignore the hidden cruelties of the chocolate trade. "In 2000, I saw a segment on TV with a slave who escaped from the cacao fields," Ornelas says. "He said, 'When you eat chocolate, you are eating my flesh.' As a vegan who believes in fighting for justice, I knew I could never look at chocolate the same way again."

Tracking this industry for years, Ornelas has no illusions about the abuses within the trade. "Children as young as seven years old have been reported using machetes," she says. "Even on certified farms, children have been beaten severely for trying to escape. The bodies of slaves who have escaped have scars all over their backs. They are locked in at night."

As ethical consumers, many of us take special care to research and source our purchases. Just as we refuse to support companies that use animal testing and scrupulously avoid products that include ingredients of animal origin, once we learn about the entrenched culture of cruelty behind the scenes of cocoa production, it's easy to see how our chocolate choices warrant a similar scrutiny and diligence. Our principles insist that there is no exploitation of cows in the chocolate we purchase, but what about exploitation of some of the most vulnerable people in the world?

Raising the bar

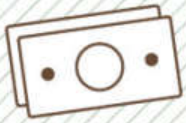
While millions of West African children suffer from conditions the International Labour Organization's Convention 182 calls the Worst Forms of Child Labor, social-justice activists are working to change this problem. The goal, many say, is getting the major chocolate companies to address the ways in which they contribute to the culture of abuse within the industry. In 2001, US Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY) introduced an amendment to an agricultural bill that would allocate funds for a new label to identify cocoa products grown and harvested without child labor. The amendment was approved by the House of Representatives and was on its way to the Senate before the Chocolate Manufacturers Association—which hired former senators George Mitchell and Bob Dole to lobby against the bill's passage—struck a deal to negotiate rather than allow the label to come to pass. The signing on of Senator Tom Harkin effectively watered down the original labeling effort, which has become known as the Harkin-Engel Protocol.

Drafted and signed in 2001, the Harkin-Engel Protocol aims to partner governments, the international cocoa industry, producers, workers, and non-governmental organizations to eliminate the worst forms of child labor (and forced adult labor) by 70

There is movement toward change coming from a place where the industry might feel it the most: the financial bottom line.

CHOCOLATE BY NUMBERS

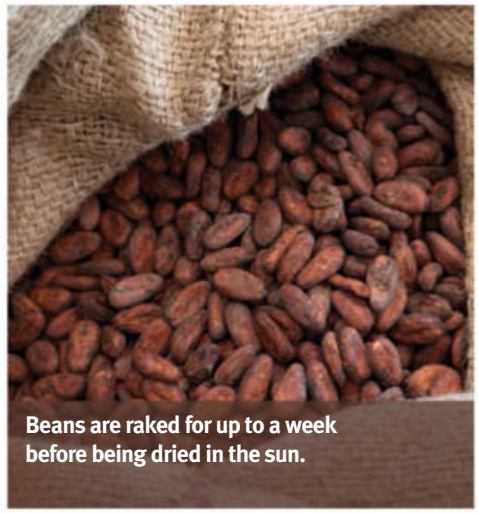
100
The number of pounds of chocolate consumed by Americans every second



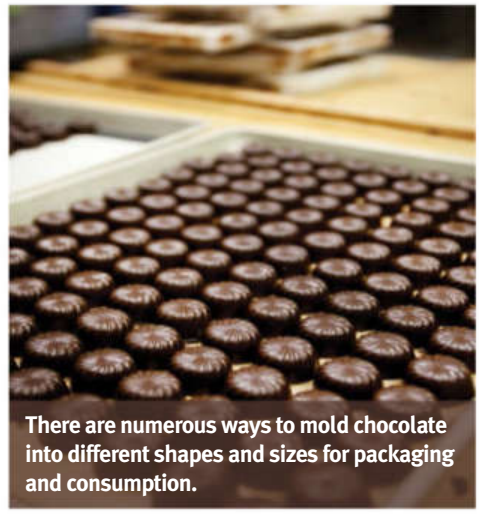
$2
The average daily wage earned by most West African growers

50 million
The estimated number of people worldwide who depend on cocoa production for their livelihoods

Cacao beans are cut from trees using large poles or machetes, often by children working to support their families.



Beans are raked for up to a week before being dried in the sun.



There are numerous ways to mold chocolate into different shapes and sizes for packaging and consumption.

percent in West Africa's cocoa industry. A voluntary agreement, the pact is not designed to end all child labor, but reduce what is considered the worst of it. Even with this diminished goal, though, reform measures are proving to be disappointingly out of reach. Given the deep pockets of the companies that have signed the protocol—including Guittard, Hershey, Mars, and Nestlé—it cannot be overlooked that more progress toward paying cocoa farmers a living wage, an issue many consider the largest in addressing the worst of the exploitation, is not being made. For example, according to Tulane's 2010 report, for the protocol to meet its remediation goals, more than 97 percent of cocoa-growing communities in Ivory Coast and 84 percent in Ghana would still need to be reached. No forced adult-labor remediation interventions are in place in either country.

"The first deadline for the protocol was 2005, then 2008, then 2010, and the new one is 2020," McGill says. "The problem is that there is no legally binding mechanism that will force the companies to address the issues. Building schools and helping farmers are good things, but they are not systematically designed to ensure anything for improving life for the cocoa farmers, which is the root cause of the problem. The companies will need to be accountable, but without acknowledging responsibility for the specific problems happening in their supply chain, it's just an acknowledgement that the problem exists."

Still, there is movement toward change coming from a place where the industry might feel it the most: the financial bottom line. The 9th District Circuit Court of Appeals has recently ruled that three former child slaves from Mali can sue Nestlé, Archer Daniels Midland, and Cargill for aiding and abetting child slavery in Ivory Coast and Ghana, and, further, that these firms may have tolerated slavery to keep production costs low (Hershey's is facing a similar suit from a different claimant), overruling a 2010 court decision stating that US courts did not have jurisdiction for human-rights violations by corporations that occur outside of the US borders. "Driven by the goal to reduce costs in any way possible,"

400

The number of cocoa beans required to make one pound of finished chocolate

$98 billion

The projected global sales for chocolate in 2016

History of Chocolate

The 2007 discovery in Honduras of pottery with cocoa residue has helped anthropologists trace our experimentation with the fruit of the trees back to at least 1400 BC. Originally native to Mesoamerica, these cocoa trees provided the first chocolate drink, which was a fermented alcoholic beverage made with the sweet pulp of the pods. The Olmecs of south-central Mexico become enamored with the beans, developing the process of fermentation, drying, roasting, and grinding that still forms the basis of chocolate production today. Later, the beans were frothed with water, chiles, and spices for the storied beverage enjoyed by the Mayan and Aztec elite (and those on their way to become human sacrifices). According to legend, when the Aztec king Moctezuma II offered his beloved drink to Spanish invader Hernán Cortés, the conqueror found it to be wholly unpalatable due to its signature bitterness. Once cane sugar was added, the beverage took on a completely new flavor dimension and quickly spread in popularity across Spain. By the 17th century, the rest of Europe began experimenting with cocoa, and it soon took on the sweet, creamy, and solid-bar qualities associated with modern chocolate.

Chocolate101

While chocolate goes down smooth, getting our favorite sweet to our mouths isn't nearly as easy. In fact, the transformation of the cocoa tree into a delicious candy bar is a nine-step process that requires felling trees, fermentation, molding, and shipping. Here's what it takes to get a chocolate bar onto store shelves.

STEP 1: Harvesting Pods are cut from cocoa trees with machetes or long poles with sharp edges.

STEP 2: Bean extraction Beans are evaluated for quality, split in half with a machete or mallet, and removed.

STEP 3: Fermentation Beans are placed between leaves or sacks for up to six days to stop the germination and help develop the flavor.

STEP 4: Drying Laid out on large mats or tarps, beans are raked for up to a week to dry in the sun.

STEP 5: Winnowing At the processor, bitter husks are removed from the cacao nib, which will be used to make the chocolate.

STEP 6: Grinding Nibs are ground into a paste called chocolate liquor or mass, which is either used as-is or further processed into cocoa butter.

STEP 7: Conching Chocolate liquor and cocoa butter are mixed and aerated with other ingredients such as sugar and vanilla.

STEP 8: Tempering Chocolate is cooled and warmed until it reaches a uniform crystallization of ingredients. Additional ingredients such as nuts, dried fruit, and flavorings are added.

STEP 9: Molded and shipped Finally, melted chocolate is poured into molds. Once solid, it is wrapped, labeled, packed, and stacked for shipping.

US Circuit Court of Appeals judge Dorothy Wright Nelson wrote, "The defendants allegedly supported the use of child slavery, the cheapest form of labor available."

Signs of hope?

While efforts to change the status quo of the chocolate industry are in place, there are alternatives for chocolate produced without human exploitation. For starters, the Latin American cocoa industry shows no evidence of child or slave labor. Furthermore, according to the International Cocoa Organization, of the small market for certified organic cocoa production (less than 0.5 percent of world production), most comes from Latin America and demand is growing at a swift pace, with sales increasing from $171 million in 2002 to $304 million in 2005.

Labels from one of several certifying bodies, specifically the label designating a product as "Fair Trade," have been enacted to help chocolate enthusiasts determine which brands are produced without human exploitation. In theory, Fair Trade ensures more equitable international trade agreements, a better program for sustainability, and a living wage for producers and laborers along the supply chain. As with the misleading or outright fraudulent marketing used by animal agribusiness, though, activists watching the chocolate industry fear that the Fair Trade label might give consumers a false sense of security when deciding whether or not to buy a product or support a company.

Originally conceived in the 1940s by religious and charitable organizations, the Fair Trade movement gained momentum in the 1960s as a way to challenge the exploitative trade model by supporting small farmers and sellers with progressive, labor-friendly business practices. Sadly, this concept is not guaranteed, as instances of illegal child labor on a Fair Trade-certified cooperative in Ghana (which resulted in the suspension of several suppliers), and a controversy in 2011 when farms certified by UTZ Certified and Rainforest Alliance—labels focused on sustainability that also purport to designate chocolate that is free of exploitative labor practices—were discovered to have child laborers. There is also the charge from worker cooperative Equal Exchange that the certifying body Fair Trade USA (formerly known as TransFair) is lowering standards, cutting farmers out of its governance model, and certifying large plantations.

> There are other signs of hope for those of us who like our chocolate without a troubled conscience.

A recent development in the movement toward a more ethical chocolate industry is the concept of Direct Trade with growers. With one-on-one engagement, greater transparency, and accountability, Direct Trade chocolate companies work with cocoa farmers and collectives rather than brokers to ensure higher pay and profit sharing for those who grow the cocoa beans. For bean-to-bar company Askinosie Chocolate, Direct Trade

CHOCOLATE BY NUMBERS

70%

The estimated amount of a chocolate bar's value that goes to marketing, research, and development to promote chocolate and bring new confections to consumers

½%

The percentage Fair Trade chocolate represents in the global chocolate industry

practices are the most consistently principled option for its products and as a way to sidestep concerns about Fair Trade.

"There is a huge cost to farmers who want their small farms certified Fair Trade," Askinosie Chocolate founder Shawn Askinosie says. "We feel Direct Trade is a better approach: it is knowing and having a relationship with our suppliers, whom we refer to as our 'farmer partners' because that is who they are. In Tanzania, those Direct Trade farmer relationships have allowed us to partner with local schools to support programs for empowering girls, drill a water well, buy textbooks and computers, build classrooms, and the list goes on."

Ethical chocolate

There are other signs of hope for those of us who like our chocolate without a troubled conscience. Ornelas's FEP has made sourcing ethically produced cocoa easier than ever with its thoroughly researched and up-to-date list of recommended companies (see "Good Bar"). There is also a small but growing number of chocolatiers who sidestep the cruelty of the dairy industry as well as cruel labor practices. One such producer, Sjaak's Organic Chocolates in Petaluma, CA, is an inspiring story of a family-operated business that does not require the compromising of ethics while maintaining high standards for its products. Owned by Dutch-born, European-trained confectioner Jacques Holten, Sjaak's (Jacques in Dutch) is raising the bar for ethical practices within the chocolate industry. A longtime vegetarian, Holten went vegan four years ago, prompting the family to phase out milk from its chocolates. This was a risky endeavor given that Sjaak's had an established and loyal customer base, but Jessica Holten-Casper, head of sales at Sjaak's, says the move was "a risk worth taking to do the right thing."

Holten worked hard to develop chocolates that met his exacting standards and emulated the creaminess of dairy chocolates, and found most of his customers still enjoyed the products while forming a new audience with vegan- and dairy-free chocolate lovers.

Conscious consumption

Some chocolate-exploitation experts believe no West African cocoa is ethical because the culture of worker abuse and forced child labor is too pervasive and a lack of transparency keeps us from knowing exactly what practices we are supporting with our dollars.

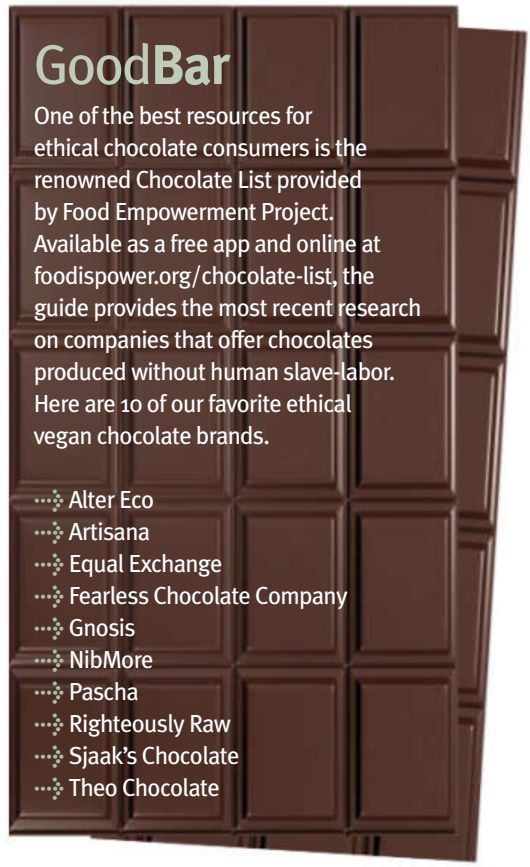
"A majority of chocolate comes from Western Africa where the worst forms of child labor—including slavery—are prevalent," Ornelas says. "As of now, as an organization, we cannot recommend chocolate sourced from Western Africa, with a few exceptions." Others believe that given how impoverished Ghana and Ivory Coast are and how vital this industry is to its economies, supporting smaller, more progressive businesses using West African cocoa is a better way to vote with one's dollars.

"They need these jobs," McGill says. "These are two of the poorest countries and cocoa is a massively successful industry. The profits should just be equally shared along the entire production chain."

All agree that small producers, not just the powerful corporations and its stakeholders, need to have a say regarding price determination in order to begin to unravel the scourge of child slavery. In addition, the companies that have benefitted from this very imbalanced power structure and free labor must contribute to remediation efforts in West Africa.

In the meantime, conscious consumers need to aim for a higher standard of consistency. We can examine our purchasing habits, and we can support the producers we know to be selling truly cruelty-free chocolate. When we do this, we can finally enjoy chocolate again without a troubled conscience. VN

Marla Rose *is a writer and co-founder of veganstreet.com, a website and shop dedicated to creating innovative, effective, and thought-provoking materials to help build a more compassionate world.*



GoodBar

One of the best resources for ethical chocolate consumers is the renowned Chocolate List provided by Food Empowerment Project. Available as a free app and online at foodispower.org/chocolate-list, the guide provides the most recent research on companies that offer chocolates produced without human slave-labor. Here are 10 of our favorite ethical vegan chocolate brands.

- Alter Eco
- Artisana
- Equal Exchange
- Fearless Chocolate Company
- Gnosis
- NibMore
- Pascha
- Righteously Raw
- Sjaak's Chocolate
- Theo Chocolate

23

The pounds consumed per capita each year by the Swiss, the world's largest consumers of chocolate

33%

The decreased risk of heart disease by eating dark chocolate daily, according to some studies

55%

The increase in chocolate eaten by people when they are depressed

Holiday Shopping Guide

Back again and better than ever, our 2015 Holiday Shopping Guide is loaded with tasty, practical, and festive holiday gift-giving ideas for your family and friends. From beautiful baubles and fashion-forward footwear to cruelty-free bodycare and fair-trade chocolate, this season's guide is packed with more green, compassionate options than ever before. Happy shopping!

BEAUTY

Vegan Beauty Box Subscription & Luxury E-Boutique

Catering to beauty devotees interested in living a more compassionate lifestyle, Petit Vour (pronounced "pehtee vohr") delivers fresh beauty finds—culled from beauty's kindest—right to your doorstep each month. Inside your subscription box, you'll find four personalized beauty products for you to apply, blend, buff, lather, soak, and spray. Purchase your new full-sized favorites in the PV Shop and earn 20% back in rewards on every purchase, plus free shipping on orders $50+. Compassionate and affordable—how's that for guiltless?

petitvour.com

VEGNEWS DEAL:
Use coupon code "VEGNEWS-GIFT" to receive a $17 bottle of AILA nail polish in your first subscription box

FOOD

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fakemeats.com
847-986-8606

FOOD

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Amella Vegan Gray Salt Caramels are made by hand with organic tapioca syrup, raw blue agave nectar, and enrobed in organic fair-trade 72% dark chocolate. Finished with gray sea salt harvested in France, these caramels make great gifts and stocking stuffers!

- **amellacaramels.com**
- **800-205-0080**

FASHION

Kat Mendenhall's Handmade Vegan Goods & Western Wear

Handcrafted in Texas and sourced in the USA, Kat Mendenhall offers vegan cowboy boots, belts, purses, and wallets for both men and women. Her cruelty-free products are giving leather the boot and proving that animals don't have to suffer for fashion and comfort. As a native Texan and vegan activist, Kat is a pioneer in offering the first stylish, unique, and artistically designed non-leather cowboy boots for country folk and city-slickers alike.

- **katmendenhall.com**
- **469-209-9022**

VEGNEWS DEAL:
Use discount code "vegnews" for 10% off one pair of cowboy boots by December 31

WINE

Vegan Wine for the Holidays!

This holiday season, share a bottle of vegan organic wine from Frey Vineyards, crafted by vegetarian winemaker Paul Frey. Gluten-free and made with no added sulfites, share a bottle with friends or give a membership to the Organic Wine Club.

- **freywine.com/near-you**
- **800-760-3739**

FASHION

Yoga Performance, For Your Feet!

Ahnu, in partnership with Blake Brody, has created the In Studi-Om shoe for unparalleled on-the-mat performance. Perfect for yoga, pilates, barre, and other forms of fitness, its moisture-wicking materials and silicon grips allow the toes to stretch and spread naturally. The unique design and lateral sides improve balance on a mat or any other hard surface. Made from all-vegan materials!

- **ahnu.com/vegan**

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Use coupon code "2DAYAHNU" for free two-day shipping

BEAUTY

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Want beautiful, glowing skin using 100% vegan, cruelty-free products? Get the Trufora 3 Piece Night Rejuvenation System—a powerful combo that works while you sleep so your skin wakes up refreshed. Set includes #1 Night Serum 85 (patent-pending formula), #2 Intensive Night Treatment (featured on Shape.com's Top 10 P.M. Skincare), and #3 Perfecting Eye Treatment. Trufora is clinically proven, non-irritating, and contains the highest-quality ingredients that provide anti-aging benefits. Save 20% off the Night Rejuvenation set and receive free shipping on all orders!

trufora.com

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Use coupon code "VegGlow" to receive a free Triple Action Exfoliator ($45 value) with any monthly subscription purchase

FASHION

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MooShoes offers the largest selection of vegan shoes and accessories in the world—online, in its NYC store, and now in Los Angeles. Browse its collection of 100% cruelty-free shoes, bags, wallets, belts, and more for men and women, including its award-winning Jackson desert boots.

mooshoes.com
866-598-3426

FOOD

VeganEssentials.com is Your One-Stop Vegan Holiday Shopping Destination

With so many awesome vegan products in one location, it's no wonder VeganEssentials.com is known as the one-stop shop for all your holiday needs! Whether you're shopping for friends and family or simply treating yourself to something fun, you'll find more than 1,500 fantastic all-vegan items including food and sweets (with plenty of great chocolate gift boxes!), vitamins and supplements, body care and cosmetics, footwear, home goods, books, t-shirts, and more. Add in fast shipping, low prices, and unbeatable customer service, VeganEssentials.com will make your holiday shopping easier than ever this season.

veganessentials.com
866-888-3426

FOOD

Delicious, Organic Vegan Holiday Chocolates

Sjaak's Organic Chocolates is an independent, family-owned chocolatier specializing in vegan chocolates. Customers love its array of holiday chocolates such as hazelnut snowballs, gummy-stuffed Santas, peanut butter trees, and nuts and chews. Sjaak's also offers chocolate bars, bites, gift boxes, and the amazing Eli's Earth candy bars.

sjaaks.com
707-775-2434

FOOD

Outrageously Savory Vegan Crunch

Rawxies Crunch is a deliciously savory snack that is vegan, gluten-free, nut-free, and paleo-friendly. Create the ultimate party platter this holiday season by pairing Rawxies' crunch with fresh guacamole, spicy hummus, and your favorite bottle of wine. It's a treat all of your guests will enjoy!

rawxies.com
816-231-0486

BEAUTY

Change Your Skin with Raw, Organic, & Edible Skin Care

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theherbalfacefood.com
818-480-2845

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FASHION

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These faceted crystal necklaces hold 2–3 drops of essential oil, so now you can have your favorite oil with you at all times. Enjoy its soft diffusion as you wear it, and a necklace makes a great gift for both children and adults.

zoeandpiper.com
480-268-9518

FOOD

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Daisey Fresh brings the technology of food preservation to keep fruits and vegetables firmer, tastier, and lasting longer in your fridge. Daisey Fresh filters last 30 days in your produce drawer, can then be used again in your tennis shoes, golf shoes, backpacks, or any odor area that needs to smell fresh as a Daisey.

daiseyfresh.com
561-302-6106

VEGNEWS DEAL:
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FASHION

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compassionatecloset.com

FASHION

We've Got You Covered

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lookielou.com
847-943-3999

BOOKS

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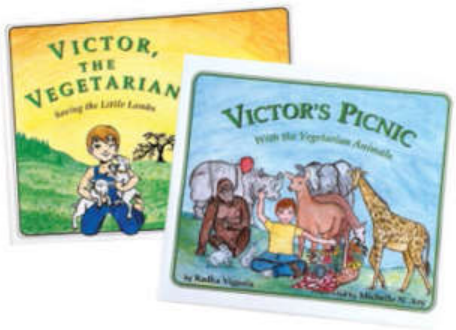
Need a gift that could make a difference in a child's life? Give the gift of Victor, the subject of an adorable set of books about a farm boy's journey to become a vegan. Beautifully illustrated, *Victor the Vegetarian* and *Victor's Picnic* belong on every child's bookshelf. Ask the author to autograph!

radha@cruzio.com
831-419-0932



FASHION

Fair Labor Vegan Footwear & More

The Vegetarian Site offers an extensive selection of men's and women's fair labor vegan footwear and much more, made in the USA and Europe. Choose from a variety of vegan products for everyone on your list, and they'll donate 10% of every sale to non-profit vegan and animal-rights causes.

thevegetariansite.com
860-519-1918

FOOD

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chunkiedunkies.com
610-574-3362

BEAUTY

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SMOOTHIE

10 oz coconut milk
1 scoop vanilla *Classic Plus*
1 organic frozen banana
1/2 tsp nutmeg powder
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp coconut oil
1 tsp hemp seeds
Dash of cardamom
Handful of ice

blend and enjoy!

SOY FREE · Raw · GLUTEN FREE · DAIRY FREE · VEGAN

MADE WITH ORGANIC

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+
Brown Rice
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Quinoa
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SUNWARRIOR

SunwarriorVegNews.com facebook.com/sunwarrior

Joy of Eating

From spinach-lentil bacon croquettes to Brandy-infused peanut butter pound cake, impress your guests with this elegant cocktail party menu guaranteed to bring cheer to your holiday gathering.

By Heather Bell & Jenny Engel

PHOTOS BY **OLIVES FOR DINNER**

THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS UPON US, which also means the holiday party season is in full swing. Whether it's afternoon office get-togethers or Sunday dinners with family, you'll have plenty on your plate thanks to our array of mouthwatering vegan appetizers, desserts, and cocktails. Create a show-stopping platter of Wild Mushroom & Cream Cheese Tartlets, Homemade Soft Pretzel Bites, Spiced Caramel Flan, and Apple Pie Doughnuts with Cinnamon Icing, and savor custom cocktails such as our sumptuous Cocoa-Kissed Brandy Alexander. Whichever menu you design for your holiday table, these stunning dishes are bound to make your celebration even more festive.

Festive Bites

Tomato-Herb Ricotta Squares

Makes 18 squares

- **2 sheets vegan puff pastry, thawed according to package directions**
- **¼ cup roasted, unsalted almonds**
- **⅓ cup water**
- **1 (16-ounce) block extra-firm tofu, pressed**
- **¾ teaspoon salt, divided**
- **¾ teaspoon black pepper, divided**
- **3 tablespoons lemon juice, plus zest of ½ lemon**
- **⅛ teaspoon grated nutmeg**
- **1 garlic clove, finely chopped**
- **1 teaspoon brown rice syrup**
- **4 fresh thyme sprigs, finely chopped**
- **6 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped**
- **8 fresh mint leaves, finely chopped**
- **2 teaspoons mellow white miso paste**
- **8 red cherry tomatoes, halved**
- **8 yellow cherry tomatoes, halved**

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or silicon mat. In a blender or food processor, add almonds and water. Blend until smooth and set aside.

2. In a large bowl, crumble tofu with hands. Add ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper, lemon juice and zest, nutmeg, garlic, brown rice syrup, thyme, basil, mint, and miso. Add almond mixture, and combine until uniform. Set aside for 10 to 30 minutes to develop flavors.

3. Cut each sheet of puff pastry into nine 2½-inch even squares. Place squares on baking sheet, and top each square with 1 tablespoon ricotta filling, leaving a ¼-inch border around edge. Crimp edges of puff pastry squares around the ricotta with your fingers, creating a bird's nest shape.

4. Sprinkle tomatoes with remaining ¼ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper, and top each puff pastry square with a few red and yellow tomato halves. Bake for about 22 to 26 minutes, or until golden. Serve warm or room temperature.

Wild Mushroom & Cream Cheese Tartlets

Makes about 12 tartlets

- **3 sheets (14 x 18-inch) phyllo dough, thawed according to package directions, cut into 16 squares**
- **2 teaspoons olive oil**
- **2 teaspoons vegan butter**
- **1 shallot, finely chopped**
- **2 garlic cloves, finely chopped**
- **1 red jalapeño or red Fresno pepper, deseeded and finely chopped**
- **10 cremini mushrooms, finely diced**
- **7 oyster mushrooms, finely diced**
- **2 teaspoons dry sherry or cooking sherry**
- **2 teaspoons red wine vinegar**
- **1 teaspoon brown rice syrup**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **¼ teaspoon black pepper**
- **2 fresh rosemary sprigs, finely chopped**
- **½ cup vegan cream cheese**
- **2 teaspoons lemon juice**
- **2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In sauté pan over medium heat, add olive oil and vegan butter. Add shallot, garlic, jalapeño pepper, and cook about 3 to 5 minutes to soften.

2. Add both mushrooms, sherry, red wine vinegar, brown rice syrup, salt, pepper, and rosemary. Sauté for 5 to 7 minutes, or until liquid has evaporated. Let mixture cool slightly, then place in large mixing bowl. Add cream cheese, lemon juice, and flour. Fold mixture together, and set aside.

3. Place 4 phyllo squares in cups of greased cupcake pan with edges of phyllo coming up sides. Fill each cup with about 1½ tablespoons cream cheese-mushroom filling. Bake 20 to 24 minutes, or until golden. Set aside to cool slightly, and serve warm or at room temperature.

Crispy Spinach-Lentil Bacon Croquettes

Makes 14 croquettes

For the spinach-lentil bacon croquettes:

- **4 cups water**
- **1 teaspoon salt, divided**
- **1 cup dry green lentils**
- **2 teaspoons, plus 1 tablespoon safflower oil**
- **6 strips seitan bacon, finely diced**
- **4 cups packed fresh baby spinach**
- **1 garlic clove, finely chopped**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon vegan butter**
- **¼ teaspoon black pepper**
- **½ teaspoon dried basil**
- **½ cup unsweetened almond milk**
- **¼ cup lemon juice, plus zest of ½ lemon**
- **1 tablespoon brown rice syrup**

For the caramelized shallots:

- **1 tablespoon vegan butter**
- **4 shallots, cut into thin strips**
- **2 teaspoons maple syrup**
- **1 teaspoon lemon juice**
- **¼ teaspoon salt**
- **¼ teaspoon black pepper**

1. For the spinach-lentil bacon croquettes, in a medium pot, add water, ¼ teaspoon salt, and bring to a boil. Add lentils, then lower heat and cook until tender, about 18 to 20 minutes. Reserve ¾ cup lentils in a small bowl, and set aside. Add remaining ¼ cup lentils to a large food processor.

2. In a sauté pan, add 2 teaspoons oil and seitan bacon. Cook about 2 minutes. Add spinach, and cook for about 3 more minutes, or until wilted. Set aside.

3. In food processor with lentils, add garlic, flour, vegan butter, remaining ¾ teaspoon salt, pepper, basil, almond milk, lemon juice and zest, and brown rice syrup. Pulse until smooth. Transfer mixture to a large bowl, and add reserved whole lentils and spinach-bacon mixture. Fold together batter until well combined.

4. In a large sauté pan over medium heat, add remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Carefully spoon a heaping tablespoon of batter into pan, and cook until slightly browned, about 3 to 4 minutes per side. Repeat with remaining batter.

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Apps

Soft pretzels, herb-ricotta squares, and cheesy tarlets? Now that's a party!

5. For the caramelized shallots, in a sauté pan over medium-low heat, add vegan butter and shallots. Cook about 3 minutes. Add maple syrup, lemon juice, salt, and pepper, and cook until shallots are soft over medium-low heat, about 10 minutes.

6. To serve, top each spinach-lentil bacon medallion with a small amount of caramelized shallots. Serve warm.

Homemade Soft Pretzel Bites

Makes 3 dozen bites

- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¾ cup warm water
- 1 package active dry yeast (about 1½ teaspoons)
- 2 tablespoons vegan butter
- 1 cup whole-wheat pastry flour
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 2 to 3 teaspoons safflower oil, for brushing dough
- 3 tablespoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt, dried minced onion, caraway seeds, poppy seeds, or combination of desired toppings
- Assorted dips or mustard, for serving

1. In a small bowl, add sugar to warm water and whisk. Add yeast and gently agitate, then set aside for 10 minutes until foamy. In a small pot over low heat, add vegan butter and melt.

2. In a large mixing bowl or stand mixer with dough hook, add both flours and salt. Pour in melted butter and yeast mixture, and knead until stiff ball of dough forms. If kneading by hand, transfer to a floured surface, and knead until smooth.

3. Place dough into lightly oiled bowl, cover with a damp clean towel, and set aside to rise about 1 hour. Divide dough into 1-foot coils about 1-inch thick. Cut coils into 2-inch pieces. Brush lightly with oil, and set aside to rise about 15 to 30 minutes.

4. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Lightly grease a baking sheet. Add baking soda to a pot of water, and bring to a boil. Boil each pretzel, top side down for about 1 to 2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, place on baking sheet. Sprinkle generously with salt or other desired toppings.

5. Bake for about 12 to 14 minutes, or until golden. Serve warm with desired dips or mustard.

Cognac-Spiked Cheese Fondue

Serves 6

- 1 cup raw cashews
- 1¼ cups water
- 1 small garlic clove
- 3 tablespoons vegan butter
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup nutritional yeast
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon Cognac
- 1 tablespoon brown rice syrup
- ⅛ teaspoon fresh nutmeg
- 1¼ cups soy milk creamer
- 2 tablespoons arrowroot powder
- 1 toasted French baguette, sliced into ½-inch thick rounds, for serving
- 2 to 3 pieces seasonal fruit such as pears, tart apples, and figs, for serving

1. In a high-speed blender, blend cashews and water until creamy. Set aside.

2. Rub 6-quart pot with garlic, then discard garlic. Heat pot over a medium flame, and add vegan butter and flour to make a roux (paste).

3. Once roux is golden, add nutritional yeast, white wine, and lemon juice. Whisk until smooth. Add cashew cream, salt, pepper, Cognac, brown rice syrup, and nutmeg, and cook for about 5 to 7 minutes over medium heat, or until thick.

4. Whisk together creamer and arrowroot. Slowly add creamer mixture to pot, whisking constantly. Cook for an additional minute, or until smooth.

5. Place mixture in a large fondue pot, and keep warm with tea light candles or gel fuel. Serve with slices of seasonal fruit and baguette toasts for dipping.

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Ginger-Pomegranate Punch

Serves 4

- **2 (12-ounce) cans chilled ginger ale**
- **1½ cups chilled pomegranate juice**
- **⅔ cup chilled apple juice**
- **1 2-inch piece fresh ginger, grated**
- **Seeds of ½ fresh pomegranate**
- **1 orange, sliced into thin rounds**
- **10 to 12 fresh mint leaves**
- **Ice, for serving**

1. In a punch bowl or pitcher, combine ginger ale, pomegranate juice, and apple juice. Grate fresh ginger over a piece of cheesecloth, and gently squeeze 1½ tablespoons juice from grated ginger into punch mixture. Stir to combine.

2. Garnish punch with pomegranate seeds, orange rounds, and fresh mint. Fill serving glasses with ice, and ladle punch over ice. Serve chilled.

Pear and Lemon-Thyme Champagne Fizz

Cocoa-Kissed Brandy Alexander

Peanut Butter-Brandy Pound Cake with a Chocolate Drizzle

Decadent Desserts

Apple Pie Doughnuts with Cinnamon Icing

Makes 8 large doughnuts

For the doughnuts:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup almond meal
- ⅓ cup sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup soy milk creamer
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons ground golden flaxseeds
- ⅓ cup refined coconut oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- ½ Pink Lady apple, finely diced
- Cooking spray, for greasing

For the cinnamon icing:

- 1¼ cups powdered sugar
- 2½ tablespoons soy milk creamer
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine flour, almond meal, sugar, cinnamon, cloves, allspice, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Whisk until smooth.

2. In a separate small bowl or measuring cup, add creamer and apple cider vinegar, and set aside for about 1 minute. Add flaxseeds to mixture, and whisk slightly. Add oil, creamer mixture, and vanilla to dry ingredients, whisking until smooth. Fold in apples.

3. Grease 6-cavity doughnut pan generously with cooking spray, and scoop batter into each space, until about ¾ full. Run a damp spoon around batter to mix evenly, clearing out centers to form doughnut shape.

4. Bake for about 20 to 23 minutes, or until toothpick comes out clean. Let doughnuts cool before glazing. Place on a cooling rack over baking sheet.

5. To make the cinnamon icing, in a medium-sized bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. To glaze doughnuts, dip top of each doughnut into glaze, and then place on cooling rack. Serve after glaze sets.

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Spiced Caramel Flan

Serves 8

- Canola cooking spray, for greasing
- ½ cup sugar, plus ⅔ cup
- ¼ cup water
- 1 (13.5-ounce) can coconut milk
- 1½ tablespoons agar agar flakes
- ½ cup raw cashews
- 2 cups unsweetened almond milk
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- ¼ cup arrowroot powder, whisked together with ¼ cup water
- 1 (12-ounce) package silken tofu

1. Lightly grease 8 8-ounce ramekins with cooking spray.

2. In a small pot over medium-low heat, add ½ cup sugar and water. Cook until sugar dissolves, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon or silicon spatula, for about 5 to 7 minutes (liquid should be clear). Bring heat to medium and cook, swirling occasionally (do not stir) until liquid turns medium-dark amber caramel color, about 10 to 13 minutes (if you have a candy thermometer, the mixture is ready at 350 degrees). If mixture crystalizes, brush sides of pot with slightly wet pastry brush. Working quickly, divide caramel among ramekins, coating bottoms evenly. Set aside to cool.

3. In a small sauce pan over medium heat, add coconut milk and agar agar, and bring to a simmer, about 8 to 10 minutes. Set aside.

4. In a high-speed blender or food processor, combine cashews and almond milk until smooth. Don't clean blender or food processor. Into pot containing coconut and agar agar mixture, add cashew mixture and split vanilla bean, and simmer for about 10 to 15 minutes, stirring frequently.

5. After about 7 to 8 minutes, add remaining ⅔ cup sugar, salt, cinnamon, cloves, and vanilla. During last minute of cooking, slowly add arrowroot mixture into coconut milk mixture, whisking thoroughly. Continue to stir at a simmer for about 1 minute, or until mixture becomes thick. Remove vanilla bean.

6. Place cooked mixture into blender or food processor, and add tofu. Blend until smooth. Divide evenly among caramel-lined ramekins. Let cool for about 15 to 20 minutes. Place in refrigerator for at least 2 hours before serving.

7. When serving, run a small knife along edge of each ramekin, then flip onto a small serving plate.

Peanut Butter Brandy Pound Cake with a Chocolate Drizzle

Serves 8

For the cake:

- 1½ cups sugar
- ¾ cup vegan butter
- 1 cup vegan sour cream
- ⅓ cup creamy peanut butter
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- ¼ cup brandy
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole-wheat pastry flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons ground golden flaxseeds
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup soy milk creamer
- Cooking spray, for greasing

For the chocolate drizzle:

- ¼ cup unsweetened almond milk
- ½ cup, plus 1 tablespoon dark chocolate chips
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

1. To make the cake, preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a stand mixer, using a paddle attachment, add sugar, vegan butter, sour cream, peanut butter, vanilla, and brandy. Blend until creamy. Alternatively, use a hand mixer, but be careful not to overmix.

2. In a separate bowl, whisk together flours, baking powder, flaxseeds, and salt. With stand mixer on low, slowly incorporate flour mixture into wet ingredients. When well mixed, add creamer, and mix until smooth and uniform, about 10 seconds.

3. Grease a 10-to-12 cup bundt pan with cooking spray. Spread batter into pan. Bake 1 hour, rotating halfway through baking time. Bake until toothpick inserted near center of cake comes out clean. Cool in pan about 15 minutes before loosening and flipping onto cooling rack. Gently remove cake. Cool completely on wire rack.

4. To make the chocolate drizzle, in a small pan, bring almond milk to a simmer. In a small bowl, add chocolate chips, and pour heated almond milk and vanilla over chocolate chips. Add salt, and allow mixture to rest about 30 seconds. Whisk until smooth, and drizzle over cooled cake.

Seasonal Spirits

Cocoa-Kissed BrandyAlexander

Makes 1 drink

- Ice, for shaker
- 1 ounce crème de cacao
- 1 (13.5-ounce) can full-fat coconut milk, refrigerated overnight
- 2 ounces soy milk creamer
- 1 ounce brandy
- 1 whole nutmeg, for grated garnish
- ⅛ teaspoon cocoa powder, for topping
- 1 square vegan chocolate bar, shaved for topping

1. Fill cocktail shaker with ice, and add crème de cacao, 3 tablespoons cream from top of refrigerated coconut milk can, creamer, and brandy. Shake vigorously until uniform.
2. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass, and garnish with freshly grated nutmeg, cocoa powder, and a few shaved chocolate curls. Serve chilled.

PearandLemon-Thyme ChampagneFizz

Makes 4 drinks

- 4 lemon-thyme sprigs, plus 4 sprigs for garnish
- 1 pear, cut into thin slices, reserving 4 slices for garnish
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- 4 ounces lemon juice
- 4 ounces gin
- 3 ounces chilled Champagne

1. In small sauce pan over medium-low heat, add lemon thyme, pear slices, sugar, and water. Bring to a boil, stirring well until slightly thickened, about 5 to 6 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool completely.
2. Pour 2 tablespoons syrup into each highball glass or Champagne flute, and add 1 ounce lemon juice and 1 ounce gin each to four glasses. Top each glass with Champagne, and stir gently to incorporate.
3. Garnish each glass with remaining 4 lemon-thyme sprigs and 1 fresh pear slice. Serve chilled. VN

Heather Bell *and* **Jenny Engel** *are sisters and co-owners of Spork Foods (sporkfoods.com), a Los Angeles-based gourmet vegan food company offering catering and cooking classes.*

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Hot Potato

Every holiday table needs buttery mashed potatoes, and our version can be customized into three mouthwatering flavors. *By Julie Hasson*

NO HOLIDAY MEAL IS COMPLETE WITHOUT mashed potatoes, but with so many varieties, choosing the right spud for your family get-together can be overwhelming. Fret not, as our delectable version of buttery mashed potatoes has just six ingredients and can easily be transformed into holiday-worthy styles such as Cheesy Scallion, Garlicky Herb, and Truffle Chive. Impress omnivores and vegans alike with these potatoes by serving them on their own or topping them with a ladleful of your favorite gravy. And for an additional nutritional punch, we've added a little something special: cauliflower. Meet your new favorite recipe for this beloved comfort-food dish.

Basic Buttery Mashed Potatoes

Serves 4 GF

- **10 small red or Yukon Gold potatoes (about 4 cups)**
- **4 cups cauliflower florets**
- **2 tablespoons nutritional yeast**
- **2 tablespoons vegan butter**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **⅛ teaspoon black pepper**

1. In a large pot, add potatoes and cauliflower. Cover with cold water, and bring to a boil over high heat. Continue cooking, uncovered, for 20 minutes, reducing heat slightly if necessary, until potatoes and cauliflower are tender and can be pierced easily with a fork.

2. Drain potatoes and cauliflower, and transfer to a large bowl. Mash well and then stir in nutritional yeast, vegan butter, salt, and pepper. Using a hand or stand mixer, beat until light and fluffy. Serve hot. If you don't have a stand or hand mixer, cook potatoes and cauliflower until very tender before mashing by hand. VN

Julie Hasson *(juliehasson.com) is a vegan chef and cookbook author based in Portland, OR who runs baking-mix company Julie's Original.*

Main Dish Magic

For an easy holiday main dish, stuff the Buttery Mashed Potatoes into portobello mushrooms for a simple-yet-elegant entrée that will impress all of your guests.

PHOTO BY **KATE LEWIS**

SmashHits

Now that you have the base for delicious mashed potatoes, you can easily add different ingredients to change the flavor. Here are a few of our holiday favorites.

Cheesy Scallion

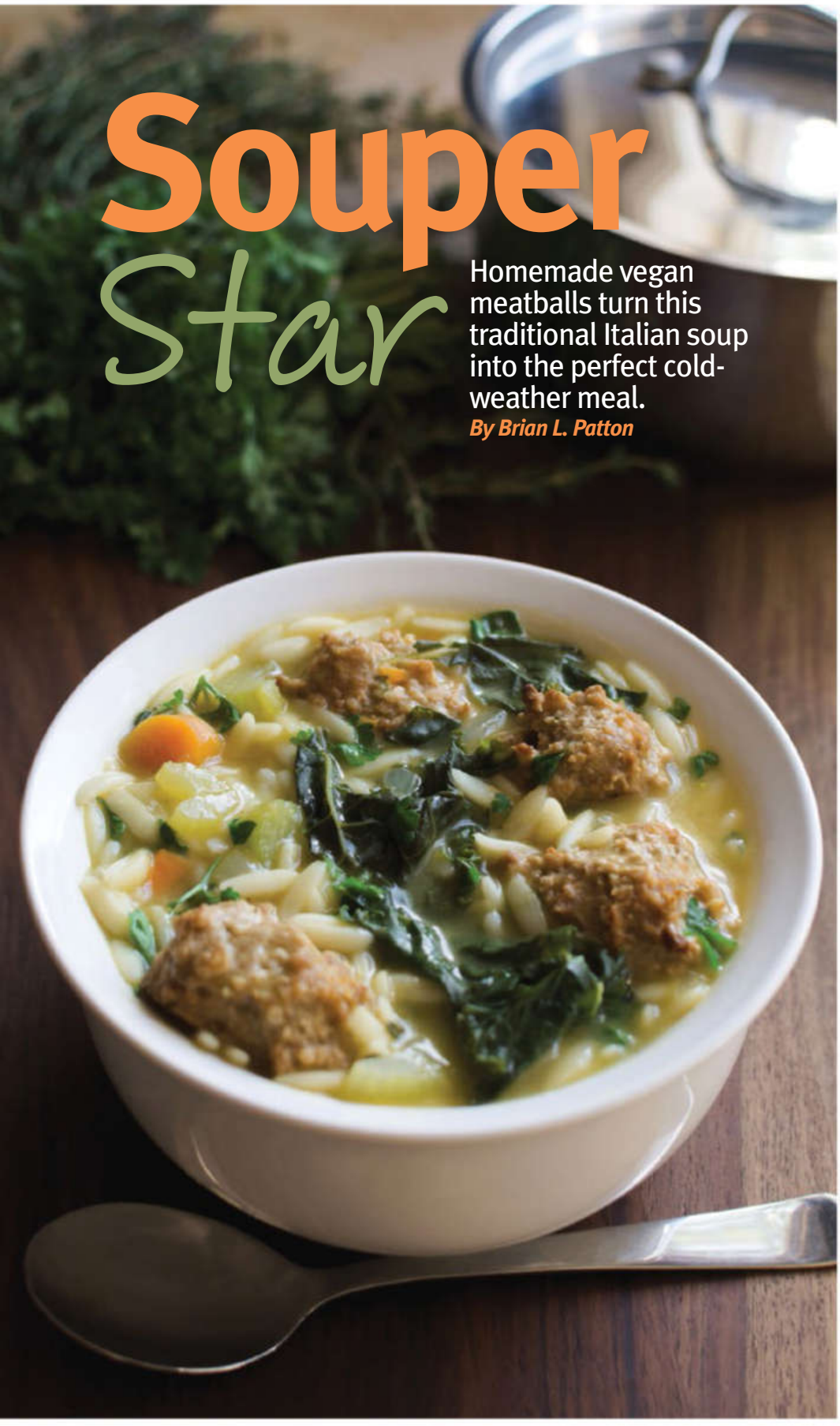
Add ½ cup shredded vegan cheddar cheese and ½ cup thinly sliced scallions to mashed potatoes and cauliflower. Beat using a hand or stand mixer.

Garlicky Herb

Reduce salt to ¾ teaspoon, omit nutritional yeast, and add ⅓ cup finely minced fresh parsley and 3 to 4 garlic cloves (pressed or minced) to mashed potatoes and cauliflower. Beat using a hand or stand mixer.

Truffle Chive

Reduce nutritional yeast to 1 tablespoon, omit vegan butter, and add ½ cup minced chives and 1½ tablespoons black truffle oil to mashed potatoes and cauliflower. Beat using a hand or stand mixer.



Souper Star

Homemade vegan meatballs turn this traditional Italian soup into the perfect cold-weather meal.

By Brian L. Patton

LEGEND HAS IT THAT ITALIAN WEDDING Soup was served to a bride and groom on their wedding day to give them energy for their first night together. While this is still a widely held belief in Italian culture, there is no actual evidence proving the age-old fable. Today, this soup is the first course served at most major holiday feasts in Italy.

The name—which is most likely derived from a misinterpretation of the soup's Italian name, *minestra maritata* (meaning "married soup")—refers to the marriage of meat and slightly bitter greens in a rich, silky broth. Our veganized version features meatballs made with chickpeas, walnuts, and breadcrumbs for a melt-in-your-mouth bite that would make any Italian *nonna* proud. Finally, we finish our festive soup with fun pasta shapes and hearty escarole. One taste, and you may just want to marry it.

ItalianWeddingSoup

Makes 12 cups

For the meatballs:

- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- ¼ cup diced onion
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley
- ¼ teaspoon fennel seeds
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ⅓ cup dried chickpeas, soaked in water overnight to yield ¾ cup soaked chickpeas
- 1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds
- ½ cup vital wheat gluten
- ¼ cup plain breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- ½ cup water, plus more as needed

For the soup:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cups diced onion
- 2 cups diced carrot
- 2 cups sliced celery
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 12 cups chicken-style vegan broth
- 1 cup very small pasta shapes (see "Soup Savvy")
- 6 cups escarole, roughly chopped and loosely packed

PHOTO BY ERIN MARIE MILLER

SoupSavvy

Follow these three easy steps to take your Italian Wedding Soup to another level.

1. Pasta fun Any good Italian market or website will offer an array of unusual pasta shapes that add a wonderful texture while also being completely adorable. Readily available orzo makes a great substitute.

2. Choose your greens Escarole is traditionally used in this soup, but kale works as well.

3. Make it ahead The flavor of soups and stews always improves overnight, so prepare this soup in advance. Just be sure to keep the meatballs separate until ready to heat.

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. To make the meatballs, in a small food processor, add walnuts, onion, garlic, parsley, fennel seeds, oregano, basil, paprika, salt, and pepper. Pulse until ingredients are chopped and combined.

2. Drain and rinse soaked chickpeas. Add chickpeas to food processor and process. Scrape down sides when necessary, and process until a grainy meal is produced. Transfer mixture to a mixing bowl and add flaxseeds, vital wheat gluten, breadcrumbs, and nutritional yeast. Using your hands, mix together with chickpea mixture until it resembles a dry crumbly mixture.

3. Add water, and mash mixture together until a slightly sticky dough ball is formed. If there are any dry parts, add one teaspoon of water at a time. Pinch off small pieces of dough, and roll into ¾-inch diameter balls. Place on a parchment-lined or lightly greased sheet pan. Spray tops with cooking spray, and bake for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside.

4. To make the soup, in a large pot over medium heat, add oil, onion, carrot, celery, and salt. Cook for 5 to 6 minutes until vegetables are tender. Add garlic and thyme, and cook an additional 3 minutes.

5. Add broth and bring to a simmer for 20 minutes. Add pasta and cook 5 to 7 more minutes, depending on cook time of pasta.

6. Once pasta is cooked *al dente*, reduce to low heat and add escarole. Stir and cook until submerged and wilted. Add meatballs to pot, and allow them to heat through for 5 minutes. Serve immediately. VN

Brian L. Patton *(thesexyvegan.com) is a chef, cookbook author, and speaker who is better known as The Sexy Vegan.*

Cookie Party

Please Santa *and* your party guests with a trayful of these festive holiday cookies.

By Jackie Sobon

PHOTO BY **JACKIE SOBON**

Iced Shortbread Sugar Cookies
Mint Chocolate Pinwheels

WITH LONG LINES AT THE MALL AND weekend soirées to attend, we often don't have time to enjoy the best part of the yuletide season: baking holiday cookies. Luckily, we've found a delicious sugar cookie recipe that serves as a base for four irresistible flavor combinations. By mastering this one recipe, mint-chocolate pinwheels, buttercream-filled cinnamon cookie sandwiches, and orange-glazed cranberry thumbprint cookies come together easily—all with just a few twists on the ingredient list. And with a quick press of a cookie cutter, you can create an array of festive shapes everyone will love. Top your treats with colored sprinkles or icing before packaging in a pretty tin or Mason jar for the perfect DIY gift, and you'll be the star guest at all your holiday parties.

Iced Shortbread Sugar Cookies

Makes 30 cookies SF

For the cookies:

- 1 tablespoon ground golden flaxseeds
- 2 tablespoons hot water
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup refined coconut oil, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon non-dairy milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

For the icing:

- 2 tablespoons chickpea brine (see "Cookie Clues")
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 1¼ cups powdered sugar, divided
- Vegan food coloring or sprinkles for decorating (see "Cookie Clues")

1. For the cookies, mix flaxseeds with water, and let sit for 5 minutes. Set aside.

2. Using a hand or stand mixer, whip sugar and coconut oil at high speed until combined. While mixing, add flaxseed mixture, milk, and vanilla, and beat until fluffy.

3. Sift together flour, baking powder, and salt. Add dry ingredients to mixer at medium speed until cookie dough is crumbly but sticks together when pressed or squeezed. Form two dough balls, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate for 10 minutes.

4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees, and line large baking sheet with a silicone mat or parchment paper. Lightly flour your workspace and rolling pin, and roll out dough to ¼-inch thick.

5. Using cookie cutters, cut out desired cookie shapes, and place on baking sheet, kneading leftover dough each time with new dough and repeating process. Bake for 10 to 11 minutes, until lightly golden. Place cookies on cooling rack (cookies will harden once cooled).

6. For the icing, in a stand mixer or in a medium bowl with a hand mixer, beat chickpea brine and vanilla at medium speed until foamy (this will take less than a minute). Add ¼ cup powdered sugar at a time while continuing to mix at medium speed until smooth.

7. Spread icing on cookies, and decorate with sprinkles. Serve once frosting has hardened and has a matte finish.

Mint Chocolate Pinwheels

Makes 24 cookies SF

For the chocolate dough:

- ½ tablespoon ground golden flaxseeds
- 1 tablespoon hot water
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup refined coconut oil, room temperature
- ½ tablespoon non-dairy milk
- ⅔ cup unbleached all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup cocoa powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch of salt

For the mint dough:

- ½ tablespoon ground golden flaxseeds
- 1 tablespoon hot water
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup refined coconut oil, room temperature
- ½ tablespoon non-dairy milk
- ¾ cup unbleached all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- ¾ teaspoon mint extract
- 2 teaspoons green superfood powder or spirulina

1. For the chocolate dough, follow steps 1–3 for the Shortbread Sugar Cookies, adding cocoa powder to dry mix. For the mint dough, do the same thing, adding mint extract to the wet mix and green powder the dry mix. Refrigerate dough for 10 minutes.

2. Place mint dough on top of 10-inch piece of plastic wrap, then roll dough into a ¼-inch thick rectangular shape. Make a 5 x 10-inch rectangle, using a pizza cutter to trim sides.

3. Roll chocolate dough out in same manner. Carefully place chocolate dough on top of mint dough, and offset lengthwise a ¼-inch so there is ¼-inch mint dough showing on one end and ¼-inch chocolate dough showing on the other end with no plastic wrap in between or on top.

4. Using bottom piece of plastic wrap, pull up the 5-inch edge on one side of the rectangle, then carefully curl it over to start making a tight roll without cracking the dough. Keep pulling the plastic wrap up to roll tightly without gaps in the roll. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and freeze for 20 minutes.

5. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Once dough log is firm, slice into ¼-inch thick cookies and place on two large baking sheets. Bake 13 to 15 minutes.

6. Remove baking sheets from oven, and wait 4 minutes before placing cookies on a cooling rack. Serve at room temperature.

Cookie Clues

Here are a few decorating hints to make your Iced Shortbread Sugar Cookies even more spectacular.

Why chickpea brine? The water from a can of chickpeas creates a meringue-like consistency for the icing.

Color magic Place icing into separate bowls, and stir a few drops of natural vegan food coloring into each bowl. Alternately, use natural colorants such as spirulina, turmeric, or paprika, adding just a pinch to each bowl.

Pipe it Make your cookies extra special by using a piping bag to frost.

Sprinkle me If using sprinkles, apply immediately, before frosting hardens.

Spiced Butter Cookie Sandwiches

Makes 15 cookie sandwiches

For spiced cookies:

- Shortbread Sugar Cookies ingredients
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

For the frosting:

- ½ cup vegan cookie-butter spread
- 3 tablespoons refined coconut oil, room temperature

- 1 tablespoon non-dairy milk
- ½ cup powdered sugar

1. For the cookies, follow directions for Shortbread Sugar Cookies, adding spices to dry mix. Refrigerate dough for 10 minutes. Use 2 ½-inch-wide circle cutters to form cookies.
2. For the frosting, in a large mixing bowl using a hand mixer, cream together cookie butter, coconut oil, and milk. While mixer is running at medium speed, slowly add powdered sugar into bowl and whip until an even consistency.
3. Spoon 1 teaspoon frosting onto each of 15 cookies, and press remaining cookies on top to create sandwiches. Store in refrigerator until ready to serve.

Orange-Glazed Cranberry Thumbprint Cookies

Makes 16 cookies SF

For the cookies:

- **Shortbread Sugar Cookies Recipe, steps 1–3**

For the cranberry filling:

- ¾ cup fresh or frozen cranberries
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 2 ½ tablespoons sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

For the glaze:

- 5 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons orange juice
- ½ teaspoon orange zest

1. For the cookies, once cookie dough is chilled, preheat oven to 350 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Form 16 patties using 2 tablespoons of dough each, and push your thumb into the center of each to create an indent. Place cookies on baking sheet, and bake for 10 to 12 minutes before cooling for 10 minutes.
2. For the cranberry filling, in a small saucepan over medium heat, bring all ingredients to a simmer, stirring occasionally. Cook 10 to 15 minutes, or until cranberries have popped and mixture has thickened. Remove pan from heat and set aside.
3. For the glaze, in a small bowl, whisk together ingredients. Place 1 teaspoon cranberry filling in the middle of each cookie, and then drizzle on glaze using a spoon or fork. VN

Jackie Sobon *(veganyackattack.com) is a blogger and professional food photographer with an insatiable sweet tooth.*

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PHOTO BY **KATE LEWIS**

Crazy for Chloe

First she won *Cupcake Wars*. Then she won the best spot on your cookbook shelf. Now, Chloe Coscarelli has won the heart of New York City with her first restaurant, by CHLOE.

By Jasmin Singer

FROM WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS TO ALLEN Ginsberg, Jackson Pollock to Joan Baez, plenty of changemakers have called the neighborhood surrounding the corner of Bleecker and MacDougal streets in New York City's Greenwich Village their home. These artists have made the area legendary, and now chef Chloe Coscarelli is standing on that very corner, making history of her own.

With her win five years ago on Food Network's *Cupcake Wars* and three best-selling cookbooks, Coscarelli's trajectory toward vegan-legend status continues to ascend thanks to her new restaurant, by CHLOE. Modern and breezy, bright and unpretentious, one step inside and already you feel like you've found your new favorite eatery.

Coscarelli—who is astonishingly driven and equally unflappable—ditched meat as a young child, then dairy and eggs a decade ago. Though she's now more of a full-on brand than a chef (as evidenced by the baseball caps marked with a simple "C" for "Chloe" for sale), her success can be attributed to her remarkable talent, which is on display at by CHLOE. With fast-food timing, a casual-dining ambiance, and a diverse menu, this restaurant pleases everyone from longtime vegans to bacon-loving carnivores.

The corner eatery is a collaboration with ESquared Hospitality—a restaurant group known for its steak houses and BLT restaurants, and certainly not for its plant-based fare. That is, not until Coscarelli googled "best restaurant hospitality services" and sent a blind email introducing her vision for bringing vegan fast food to Manhattan. Luckily, they were interested—and it seems they were onto something big. The collaborative vision for the look of the restaurant was to make the diner feel they were guests in Chloe's kitchen (assuming her kitchen seats 35, plus an additional 10 out front—where you can get in some pretty stellar people-watching).

Spacious yet homey, by CHLOE features splashes of bright, bold color peppering an otherwise black and white palette. The reclaimed wood tables are just one example of Coscarelli's commitment to the environment, and the two hanging bamboo swing chairs reflect the laissez-faire vibe that the neighborhood is known for. This eco-chic aesthetic creates the ideal backdrop for the folks glued to their computers at the zinc communal table, but everyone else in this bright, welcoming space seems to be having an awful lot of fun. Die-hard Coscarelli fans will be giddy to know that she herself is a regular at the restaurant, frequently seen popping in and out of the kitchen, or working on her laptop

The food at by CHLOE tastes as good as it looks.

among the diners.

The eclectic menu includes healthy(ish) vegan comfort food ranging from gooey mac 'n' cheese, burgers, and air-baked fries to a staggering array of freshly made desserts and smart cocktails. Vegetables are the touchstone here—you won't find much faux meat—and Coscarelli's soft spot for kale ("I put it in everything—salad, ice cream, cocktails") adds a wholesome glow to even the most hedonistic offerings. All the nut-based cheeses are homemade, boasting rich, savory depth—another reminder that vegans have indeed conquered cheese.

The media hubbub has no doubt been great for business, while the stylish character of the space certainly has drawn customers in the door, but the real reason by CHLOE has already been spotted with lines onto the sidewalk is, of course, the food. The varied and mouthwatering menu is designed to appeal to young professionals in need of a hearty but speedy quinoa taco, New York University students hoping to inhale a pesto meatball sub before class, and models searching for a yummy cold-pressed juice.

Despite the ample savory selections, head straight for the Raspberry Tiramisu Cupcake, and go backwards from there. Save plenty of room for the entrées because—similar to the woman sitting at the table next to me who was calling herself a "regular" by day three of the restaurant's opening—you, too, will want it all.

If you've arrived with a hefty appetite, follow your cupcake with Coscarelli's favorite: the Avocado Pesto Pasta. The avocados give the sauce an ultra-smooth, velvety texture, and the dish is imbued with intense fresh basil—the perfect complement to the delicate pine nuts and robust garlic. Or, try one of the two wildly different veggie burgers (you may end up returning for a late-night snack just so you can try both). The Classic Burger has a tempeh-lentil-chia-walnut patty, while the magic of The Guac Burger is a black bean-quinoa-sweet-potato blend.

And for those in too much of a rush to order at the counter, there's a quicker grab-'n'-go fridge with meals such as raw lasagna with a zingy pine-nut ricotta, matcha kelp noodles in a rich cashew cream sauce, sesame-ginger soba noodles, and raw vanilla bean chia pudding.

Something else that separates by CHLOE from some of the city's other quick and casual vegan eateries is its liquor license, which makes room for boozy beverages such as the juice-based cocktails in the "Beatnick Collection." If you opt for the Kale-Matcha Mojito, completely ignore the fact that it contains rum and focus on the sprig of greens that decorate it, a tell-tale sign that it's good for you (right?). If you're in the spirit for spirits, try the Howlin' Whiskey Mule. Or, if you're feeling more traditional, grab a beer or a glass of wine.

Besides savoring the Raspberry Tiramisu Cupcake's sweet and gooey surprise filling, I devoured Coscarelli's version of a Hostess cupcake, appropriately called Chlostess Cupcakes (gluten-free, as are several other menu items—but certainly not glutton-free). Beyond the cupcakes is the luscious cinnamon-espresso chocolate-chip cookie bursting with strong dark java, and the Kale Cookies + Cream ice cream made with almond and coconut milks, dark chocolate wafers and, yes, kale (contributing color, not flavor).

With one final scrape of my ice cream cup, I sat back and gazed in awe at the steady stream of in-and-out foot traffic, wondering if veganism is starting to reach the mainstream. Coscarelli came over to say goodbye, and I asked her, "If you've accomplished all of this in your 20s, what on earth will your 30s bring?"

She gave a big laugh, smiled, then humbly shrugged. But here's a suggestion: bring by CHLOE locations to street corners all over the country, and maybe the world. Please? VN

Jasmin Singer *is the co-host of the award-winning Our Hen House podcast (ourhenhouse.org) and author of the forthcoming memoir,* Always Too Much and Never Enough.

Got Kale?

Kale is a favorite ingredient of Coscarelli, and by CHLOE indeed has it—evidenced by menu items featuring the über-trendy cruciferous green.

- **Kale Caesar:** You had us at "shiitake bacon," though the maple-wheat croutons and almond parm certainly hold their own.
- **Kale Artichoke Dip:** Why didn't we ever think of this combination before?
- **Whiskey BBQ Sandwich:** Don't worry—even with whiskey, sautéed kale still can't make you tipsy.
- **Peanutty Kale:** But let's be honest—what wouldn't be better with peanuts?
- **Kale Cookies & Cream:** If you haven't had this housemade ice cream, trust us when we say you should.
- **Kale-Matcha Mojito:** Slow down, pardner! There's rum in that kale.

From juices to cocktails, kale takes center stage at by CHLOE.

Wisconsin Wonderland

From animal sanctuaries to whoopie pies, Wisconsin's coolest college town promises a little something for every vegan visitor. *By Hannah Anderson*

Madison, WI may not come to mind when we think of vegan-friendly cities, but perhaps it should. Farmers' markets, an eco inn serving hearty veg breakfasts, and a bakery brimming with dairy-free delights are just some of the notable destinations worth seeking in this hip university town. Wisconsin's second-largest city also boasts a 16-acre botanical garden, a 90-acre farm sanctuary, a café for chocolate lovers, and a vibrant art scene. Venture into America's heartland for an unforgettable vegan adventure that wil surprise you at every delicious turn.

Doughy Delights

More than half of the freshly baked offerings at **Bloom Bake Shop** are vegan—and that includes the beloved ginger-molasses whoopie pies. Arrive early to savor the gluten-free breakfast sandwich made with sweet potato, arugula, dairy-free cheese, and crispy fried onions. Other goodies on the vegan roster include red beet cupcakes slathered with cream cheese frosting and seasonal rhubarb-cardamom doughnuts.

bloombakeshop.com

Farm-Fresh Finds

The **Dane County Farmers' Market**—the country's largest producers-only market—takes place every Wednesday and Saturday at the state capital in the warm-weather months, and moves to a nearby indoor location during winter. If shopping for kale and 'cukes kickstarts your appetite, keep your eyes peeled for local favorite Ladonia Cafe, a vegan food cart serving comfort-food staples such as BLTs, tamales, pot pies, and chocolate chip waffles.

dcfm.org

Bloom Bake Shop: courtesy of Bloom Bake Shop

ChocolateNirvana

If the mere mention of the word "chocolate" sends your heart aflutter, you're going to swoon with joy at the vegan-friendly **Chocolaterian Cafe.** With two Madison locations, you double your odds of indulging in dark chocolate treats such as Mint Meltaways (made with coconut butter), fruit-and-nut barks, almond rochers, and chocolate-coated pretzel rods. Be sure to grab a few cinnamon-cayenne-spiced chocolate cookies for the road, perfect with a tall glass of cold almond milk.

chocolateriancafe.com

Mingle with pigs, ducks, goats, and cows at this popular animal sanctuary.

FoodieFiesta

Like Mexican food? Then **Tex Tubb's Taco Palace** is the place to get the fiesta started. The must-order dish is the Vegan Queso & Chips, a gooey dip made from a melted, pea protein–based cheese, fresh diced tomatoes, chilies, and south-of-the-border spices. During weekend brunch, its signature French toast—two thick slices of sourdough bread dredged in a blue agave-spiced almond-milk batter, grilled, then topped with sautéed peaches and ghost-pepper maple syrup—offers a Mexican twist on an American classic.

textubbstacos.com

AnimalHaven

Most vegetarians have soft spots for animals, and if that includes you, you'll need to pay a visit to **Heartland Farm Sanctuary**. Public tours from September through December introduce the sanctuary's animal-assisted therapy and humane-education programs while offering visitors the chance to meet Lola the pig, Buttercup the duck, and an array of rescued cows, chickens, and goats. November 22 marks Heartland's fifth annual "Thanksgiving for the Turkeys," a celebration that's as much fun for the resident avian population as it is for the human guests.

heartlandfarmsanctuary.org

EcoGetaway

At the **Token Creek Eco-Inn**, a day of vegan fun winds down once you're tucked between cozy layers of fair-trade cotton sheets in a bed made from sustainably grown wood. Call in advance of your stay to ensure you wake to a vegan breakfast featuring local, in-season ingredients, which might include zucchini fritters topped with sautéed portobello mushrooms or housemade granola with coconut yogurt. And if your stay is timed right, join one of the on-site workshops to learn the art of lacto-fermentation or how to make your own artisan liqueurs.

tokencreekecoinn.com

NaturalBeauty

When skies are blue and the sun shines bright, find time to experience **Olbrich Botanical Gardens**, where 16 acres of glorious Midwestern flora invite you to wander and explore. Venture inside the Bolz Conservatory—a glass pyramid rising 50-feet high—and gaze upon the colorful orchids, free-flying birds, and dramatic waterfall. In the dead of winter, this balmy indoor paradise will have you thinking you've been transported to the tropics.

olbrich.org VN

GiveAHoot

No one should leave Madison without feasting at the **Green Owl Cafe**, an almost-entirely vegan eatery with an eclectic menu featuring schnitzel, jackfruit quesadillas, cinnamon rolls, and rotating desserts like coconut key-lime cheesecake. No self-respecting vegan would dare miss the weekend brunch, with such tasty options as biscuits and gravy, a Southern skillet with scrambled tofu and hash browns, and crunchy cornmeal waffles with blueberry-jalapeño topping or a generous drizzle of Wisconsin maple syrup.

greenowlcafe.com

Hannah Anderson *lives in Milwaukee, WI, with her husband Sam and rescue dog Layla, and co-owns vegan dog treat company threepawsgourmet.com.*

Token Creek Eco-Inn: courtesy of Token Creek Eco-Inn; Green Owl Cafe: courtesy of Green Owl Cafe; Heartland Farm Sanctuary: courtesy of Heartland Farm Sanctuary

Saffron Dreams

Voyage to magical Marrakech, the food and culture mecca of Morocco.

By Lucas M. Peters

WITHIN MINUTES OF LANDING IN Marrakech, you're sitting on a colorful cushion at a fashionably restored *riad*, breathing in the fresh, minty aroma wafting up from a small glass of tea. Outside, a calm breeze rustles the leaves of the palm trees overhead, tempering the sun's heat. While pondering a decompressing visit to the local *hammam*, you're lured instead to the exciting prospects that await in the shaded passages of an ancient spice market.

Finishing your tea, you thank your hosts with a humble *shokran* (thank you) and set out into the bustling pedestrian alleyways of the famed Red City, weaving your way past bearded men hawking handspun pottery and vegetable-dyed rugs. Further on, you find yourself standing before a stall piled high with fragrant towers of cumin and saffron. "How much?" you ask, pointing to the saffron. The shopkeeper smiles wide and, like a magician, instantly produces a few delicate red and gold threads, crushes them in his hand, and asks you to inhale. Bending close to his wrinkled hand, you close your eyes and breathe deeply, taking in the earthy, floral notes, and instantly begin devising recipes: saffron risotto, saffron-spiced potatoes, baked pasta with saffron-scented tofu ricotta ...

With the irresistible pull of spice markets, the bazaars brimming with colorful handicrafts, the serene vastness of the Sahara desert, and two wild (and wildly different) coasts to explore, it's no wonder Morocco has developed into a preeminent vacation destination for intrepid voyagers. This complex, vibrant country of 34 million is often a traveler's first step into a culture that is both African and Islamic, an enticing combination for many yet mysterious enough to keep less open-minded visitors away. With its famed hospitality, rich opportunities for cultural immersion, and a bounty of vegan-friendly food options, Morocco ought to be at the top of every adventure-seeking herbivore's travel itinerary.

Modern Marrakech

For tourists, the beating heart of Marrakech is the Jemma el-Fnaa. Here, snake charmers, musicians, storytellers, and other street performers contribute to the carnival-esque atmosphere. During the day, the ancient square fills with umbrella-shaded orange juice vendors selling fresh-pressed thirst-quenchers. Let your intuition guide you, and when you've found your favorite spot, come back with your own bottle and have it filled for a mere dollar.

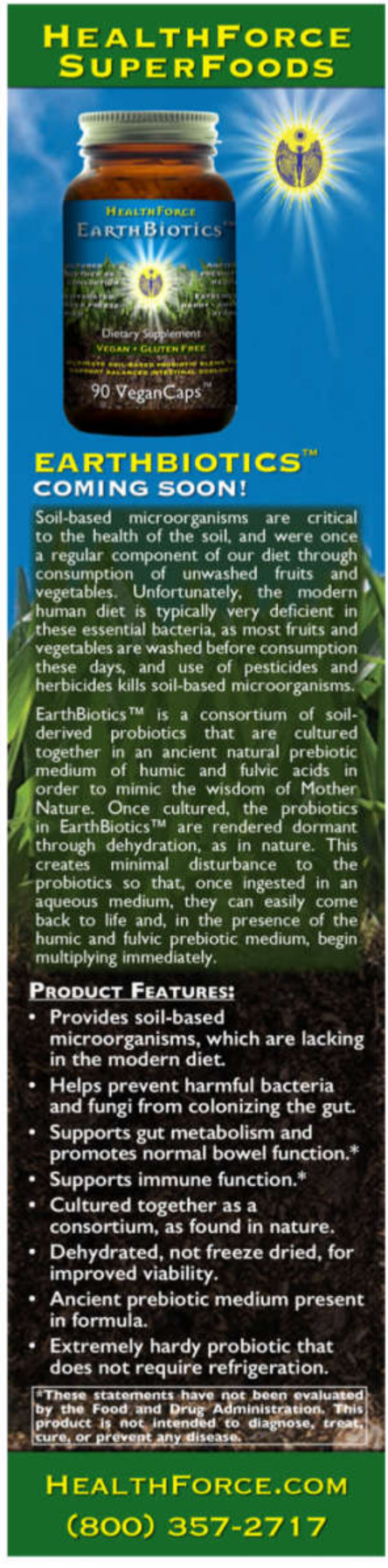
Day or night, dining options extend far beyond the square: rooftop restaurants abound in every corner of the old city, offering meals with desert views. At the popular veg eatery Earth Cafe, *pastilla* and *tajines* share menu space with American-style veggie burgers, Asian spring rolls, and rice-noodle dishes. Bread is served with small bowls of argan oil for dipping, and if you like the flavor, you can buy a bottle that was produced at a local cooperative.

In the heart of the old town, beautiful riads are tucked behind high walls fringed with palm trees, offering the sense of an oasis in the desert heat. If you've booked a room at the luxe Riad Chayma, you'll get cool respite, a warm welcome, and access to some of the best vegan food in Marrakech. Veg owners Rochelle and Rushi offer an array of options for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, from homemade muesli to seasonal vegetable tajines with preserved lemon, olives, and chickpeas. Non-guests are welcome to experience the three-course prix fixe menus with advance reservations.

In Berber culture, henna—a natural dye produced from an indigenous shrub—is believed to ward off the evil eye and bring luck, which is why it's a common pre-wedding ritual for women. For something different, pop into the Henna Art Café and experience this tradition while enjoying grilled vegetable salads and falafel sandwiches off the seasonal menu. Henna artists are on hand to adorn diners with decorative temporary

When to Go

Morocco is a year-round destination, but spring is the best time to visit as the hillsides explode in a kaleidoscope of wildflowers, the rivers run cool and strong with snowmelt, mountains shrug off the biting winter frost, and the days in the desert climes are dry and warm, making travel possible to all regions. No matter the time of year, travelers will want to pack at least one warm item for the cold desert nights, as well as a rain jacket. Leave room in your bag for souvenirs that might include saffron, pottery, or even a hand-woven rug.



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Hungry for Morocco

While veganism hasn't yet taken root in this meat-heavy culture, it's easy for herbivores to eat well in Morocco. Look for these vegan-safe dishes while exploring the country's rich culinary scene both in the cities and in the countryside.

Bissara: This filling soup, generally made with a base of chickpeas and/or split peas, is served with a generous amount of olive oil, cumin, and spicy ground red peppers. The best place to find *bissara* is along the coast, or in the old medinas, where Moroccan hard laborers stop for a bowl or two.

Couscous: The national dish of Morocco is nothing like what you buy in the box at American grocery stores. The women of Morocco take great pride in hand-rolling their couscous, which is typically served for Friday lunch, and takes an entire morning to make. Though a vegan-friendly seven-vegetable couscous is often on the menu, ask before ordering to confirm no meat broth was used to season the semolina.

Moroccan salads: Roasted peppers and eggplant, boiled and steamed greens, fresh tomatoes and onions, olives and preserved lemons … the options are endless. Many Moroccan salads are available only on special request and not necessarily found on the menus of the cafés you'll see lining the medina, but it never hurts to ask.

Msemen: This delectable savory crepe is made with flour, water, and vegetable oil. The very common veg version is stuffed with a tomato-pepper-onion mélange, folded over into a square, and fried on a griddle. *Msemen* makes for a delicious snack or light lunch, and can be eaten hot or cold.

Tajine: Traditionally, this Moroccan staple is prepared with meat and vegetables slow-cooked over an open fire, though there are several veg options available. The seasonal artichoke-and-pea version shouldn't be missed, though you'll often have to notify your accommodation ahead of time to feast on this mouthwatering dish.

henna tattoos, and maybe even bestow a bit of good fortune.

Just outside Marrakech's medina lies the *ville nouvelle* or "new city," where the narrow dusty footpaths give way to wide sidewalks and tree-lined boulevards with upscale restaurants and colonial-era hotels. The vibe is distinctly more Western, which can be a welcome reprieve after a few days lost in the maze-like streets of the old city. At the art-deco Jardin Marjorelle, wander the beautifully landscaped gardens made famous by fashion designer and one-time local Yves Saint-Laurent, and visit the on-site Berber Museum. Tired of exploring on foot? A taxi ride back to the Djemma el-Fna costs three dollars.

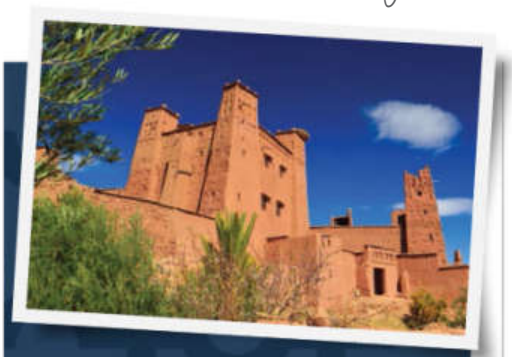
Marrakech is more of an experiential destination than a sightseeing city, and one of the best ways to really experience Moroccan culture is to learn how to prepare the various salads, tajines, and couscous dishes that will become familiar during your travels. At Faim d'Epices, Chef Nezha explains how to store all those fragrant spices you procured at the souk, describing local culinary history in the process, while you slice and dice your way to the most satisfying meal of your journey. After a cooking class, think about unwinding with some traditional oral storytelling—the foundation of such classics as *The Arabian Nights*. At Café Clock, storytellers weave their enchanting tales (in English), just as they've done for centuries.

Arabian nights

At night, the Jemma el-Fnaa erupts into a visual cacophony of temporary restaurant stalls where visitors dine on olives, tajines, marinated salads, and other tempting traditional fare at communal tables. Craving a glass of Cabernet with your couscous? Too bad! Despite the lingering French influence, drinking in public is frowned upon, and local laws forbid alcohol consumption within sight of a mosque. Tea is the beverage of choice; for that glass of Cabernet, you'll have to head to the finer dining options of Marrakech's ville nouvelle.

When the sun sets in the desert sky and casts its palm-fringed shadows across the Red City, that's your cue to head to the communal baths known collectively as hammam. With options ranging from neighborhood simplicity to upscale decadence, the basics remain consistent: a leisurely steam and a vigorous massage followed by a serious exfoliating

Kasbahs are common along Morocco's coastal regions.



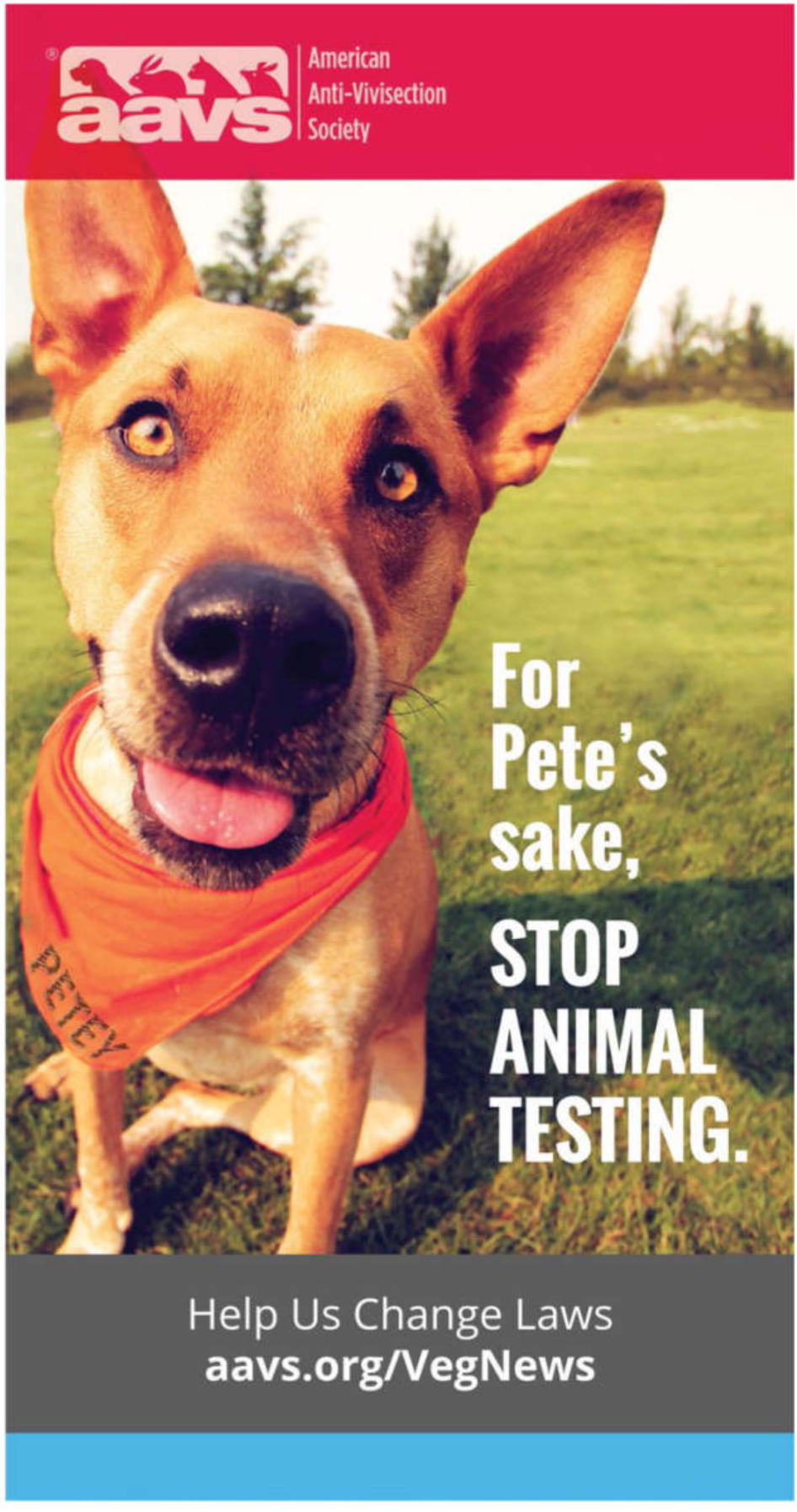
Rock the Kasbah

How can you rock the Kasbah if you don't know what one is? Here are a few handy terms for travelers to the Kingdom of Morocco:

- **Dar:** A traditional Moroccan home, smaller than a riad, featuring a small central courtyard designed to keep the house cool in the hot summer months. Many dars in the medinas have been converted to budget-friendly guest houses.
- **Hammam:** A traditional Moroccan spa treatment generally featuring a steam room, massage, scrubbing, and essential oils.
- **Kasbah:** A fortress or stronghold, made of stone along the coastal regions and clay bricks in the drier inland climate.
- **Medina:** An Arabic word that literally means "city," though now used to describe the "old walled city."
- **Riad:** A traditional Moroccan home, larger than a dar, featuring a central courtyard, generally with a fountain, designed to keep the house cool in the hot summer months. Many riads in the medinas have been converted to upscale guest houses and boutique hotels.
- **Souk:** A market typically featuring a collection of similar sellers (ie, spice market or pottery market).

scrub that leaves your skin feeling baby-soft. Partaking in this ancient ritual is so much more than a superficial pampering experience; it is a connection to a vital Moroccan tradition, and a relaxing reminder of the rich rewards the adventurous traveler reaps. VN

Lucas M. Peters *(lucasmpeters.com) spent six years in Morocco and is the author of the* Moon Travel Guide: Morocco.



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For the last 5000 years, hot water extracted medicinal mushrooms have been the centerpiece of tonic immune support in the Traditional Chinese Medicine herbal system. Many companies use an inexpensive, sterile laboratory process of growing fungal mycelium to make their "mushroom" supplements.

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In contrast, HealthForce Myco-Immunity™* contains hot water extracts of four different wood-grown medicinal mushroom fruiting bodies known for their potent immune-supportive properties. Myco-Immunity™* delivers by far the highest levels of beta-glucans in a mushroom supplement on the market. Our tests consistently show 25%+ of 1,3-1,6 beta-glucans with less than 5% starch. And, since our mushrooms have been hot water extracted, we know that the majority of these beta-glucans are actually bioavailable. Myco-Immunity™* sets a new industry standard for medicinal mushroom supplements by providing high levels of immune support at a price that beats all the competition!

Product Features
- Tonic immune support.
- Fire-enhanced for maximum bioavailability.
- Full-spectrum hot water extracts.
- 25%+ of 1,3-1,6 beta glucans.
- No grain fillers, less than 5% starch.
- No mycelium hype: 100% fruiting body extracts.
- A real mushroom supplement (as opposed to grains fermented with mycelium).

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VegNews nutritionist **Julieanna Hever, RD,** is on call for your health questions.

Healthy Holidays

Nourishing meals, hydrated skin, and faux meats

I love to indulge in bottomless mugs of vegan eggnog and extra helpings of mashed potatoes during the holidays. What healthy foods should I eat in order to balance the extra slice of pumpkin pie I know I'm going to have?

Holidays are for celebrating, and food is always a much-anticipated centerpiece in the plans, so indulging a bit and straying from our otherwise-healthy routines is to be expected this time of the year. However, with the exponential increase in less-than-pristine vegan foods, maintaining your healthy diet can be challenging. Therefore, I add nutritious, delicious foods to all of my meals to help balance my extra slice of pumpkin pie.

First, create rainbows by adding color wherever possible. Instead of leaving cranberries, persimmons, pomegranates, sweet potatoes, squash, and Brussels sprouts on the side, make them the main dishes. Opt for mashed sweet potatoes or yams instead of white potatoes, pepper a lentil loaf with cranberries or celery, or replace oil with pumpkin purée in a cake or muffin recipe.

Next, because they are chock-full of carotenoids, chlorophyll, and calcium, leafy greens are one of the most nutrient-dense food groups, so throw some chopped kale, collard greens, or broccoli into a pasta dish, casserole, dip, or dressing. Finally, when sautéeing, swap oil for vegetable broth, water, coconut water, or vinegar for a nice save of 2,000 calories per cup. For creaminess in a sauce or dressing, replace oil with flaxseeds, hempseeds, chia seeds, plant milks, silken tofu, or cannellini beans to add nutrients without sacrificing flavor.

What types of foods should I be eating during the winter to help keep my skin hydrated?

Plant-based diets provide us with bountiful hydration naturally found within fruit and vegetables. And, of course, produce is available year-round—albeit dependent on the season—so options will vary according to the climate in which you live. If it's chilly, soups and stews are superb at warming your insides while providing plenty of liquid and nourishment for your cells. To boost carotenoids, cook dark orange/yellow squashes and sweet potatoes, which are extra-excellent for your skin. Even with frosty temperatures, you can still enjoy raw produce this time of year, thanks to an abundance of persimmons, pomegranates,

EatWell

Knowing which foods to embrace and which to avoid will help you enjoy the season's best vegan dishes without gaining a pants size.

Yes to:	Limit the:
Wine spritzers	Creamy nog
Bean dips	Fondue
Whole grains	Refined breads
Legumes	Faux meats
Dark chocolate	Cakes and cookies

and citrus, as well as broccoli, cabbage, and snow peas, all of which are filled with hydrating water and nutrients for your skin. Aim for a minimum of nine servings of fruit and vegetables, and maintain your total fluid intake by drinking approximately your weight (in pounds) in ounces of water. For variety, opt for hot or sparkling water and add citrus, other fruit, or tea for additional flavor and a nutrient boost. Of course, starting from the inside out is most effective, but it also helps to take care of your skin from the outside, too. Be sure you are using chemical-free skincare products to avoid dehydration, and use a natural moisturizer daily.

Are faux meats a healthy main dish for holiday dinners?

Today's faux meats are a lot less processed than they used to be. Still, ideally, the majority of your calories should come from whole plant-foods: vegetables, fruit, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. Although faux meats are not considered whole foods, they can play a supportive role as part of the transition for newbie herbivores and as treats for longtime vegans, especially during the holiday season. Because many of these products contain high amounts of sodium and other additives, it's best to enjoy them in moderation. Show your loved ones that there is nothing they can make that you can't make better … veganized. VN

Julieanna Hever *(plantbaseddietitian.com), author of* The Vegiterranean Diet, *wishes VegNews readers a happy, healthy holiday season filled with kale, hummus, and lots of love.*

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- Our products are manufactured in a 100% Vegan facility. No animal testing or animal-sourced ingredients.
- We never use fillers, flow agents, or excipients in our manufacturing process (as is common in the industry).
- None of our products contain isolated nutrients. Our superfoods are 100% whole food supplements! Any time we use extracts or concentrates, we use whole plant extracts. Nutrition the way Mother Nature intended!
- Every ingredient that enters our facility is tested for microbials and heavy metals. We also test for identity, using the latest HP-TLC (High Performance Thin Layer Chromatography) technology, to ensure ingredients are never cut with fillers or are mislabeled by supplier. The same tests are done on the finished blend and the finished product.
- Our legendary TruGanic™ products are put through additional rounds of third-party tests to verify that they are 100% free of pesticides, irradiation, and GMOs (zero detectable).
- Our facility uses only 100% non-toxic, organic-compliant, biodegradable cleaning chemicals (far beyond what is required by USDA Organic).
- Our production area is a radio frequency-free zone (no microwaves, Wi-Fi, or cell phones permitted) and has electromagnetic (EMF) mitigating technologies (also not required by USDA Organic or any other standard).
- Our facility is NSF-certified, and compliant with GMP guidelines. We proudly go above and beyond these guidelines to attain the highest possible levels of product purity.

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Resident know-it-all **Marla Rose** solves all of your tough conundrums.

Ask Marla

Soy milk upcharges, dating a carnivore, and your not-so-polite uncle

Dear Marla,

My coffeeshop charges 60¢ to add soy milk even though they offer cow's milk for free. This makes me crazy! How can I combat this widespread overcharge?

Signed, Love Coffee, Hate Being Penalized

I'm not a coffee drinker, so I took your dilemma to esteemed experts in the field: my Facebook friends. Some said they have adapted to drinking their java without milk to avoid the charge while others started making their own caffeinated drinks at home because the additional cost upset them. Some found shops that don't charge extra and supported those businesses. Most, however, accept and pay up.

We should be excited that an increasing number of coffeeshops have added almond, soy, coconut, and macadamia milk to menus across the country. And we are. However, with the soy-foods industry earning a whopping $4.5 billion annually, it's safe to say vegan coffee creamer is no longer a niche market. Still, some businesses—both chains and mom-and-pops—charge approximately 50 percent more for plant-based milks than those of the cow variety. That's not cool.

Here's what I would do, Hate Being Penalized: if you are at an independent coffee shop, make it known that you will become a regular customer if they do not charge you extra. I specify "independent" because chains are often bound by rules that apply to every outlet, making even little changes a challenge to implement. If you are at a corporate coffeeshop, let the baristas know that you don't appreciate this upcharge and post something to that effect on the company's Facebook page.

Whatever you do, just be glad you no longer have to carry around a flask of your own creamer.

Dear Marla,

I started dating a guy and discovered he has a tattoo on his arm depicting a cow partitioned into cuts of meat. This doesn't feel right. Is this relationship doomed?

Signed, The Milk's Not Free

I'm going to level with you, Milk's Not Free, and tell you something you probably already know: the world is full of some deeply regrettable tattoos. Just look up the words "bacon tattoo" in your favorite search engine and behold the evidence.

This is to say that we all make stupid mistakes, but some are of a more permanent nature. I would try to block the tattoo from my mind and get to know him. What is he like today? Is he open to your veganism? Does he

buy you cashew-milk ice cream when you're not feeling well? Can he properly pronounce "quinoa" and "seitan"? Will he order tofu scramble even if you aren't around? These are the questions you must ask yourself, even if you have to literally block that tattoo from your field of vision.

If he's good boyfriend material despite the tattoo, keep him on. If he's not, buh-bye, and ugly tattoo problem solved.

Dear Marla,

During the holidays, my uncle loves to challenge and mock me about my vegan diet. How do I defend my beliefs while still being polite?

Signed, Feeling Perturbed Already

I had an uncle like that. Every flipping holiday, it was "Marla, do you want some turkey?" or "I was reading that veganism is an eating disorder," or, waving a corned beef sandwich under my face, "Don't tell me you're not tempted." I mean, seriously. Is it an uncle thing? Uncles of the world, could you speak to this?

Here's what I would do, Perturbed. Next time he confronts you, use the occasion to open a meaningful dialogue. For instance: "I would love to talk to you about why I am vegan, but I need to be treated in a respectful way so we can have an honest discussion. I am willing to do this without defensiveness or making it personal—are you? Then I am happy to talk about it, or maybe you'd prefer to do it at a time when we can talk comfortably without all the holiday constraints. Either way works for me." This sets healthy boundaries and lets your uncle know that while you are happy to talk, you won't be disrespected.

If you're able to keep the conversation moving, be prepared to stand up for yourself, especially if he breaches those boundaries. Family members are notorious for not understanding these limits, especially if a pattern has been established in the past. Make sure, too, that you are modeling respectful communication. No matter what your uncle decides, you have clearly stated your expectations and established that you are not afraid to discuss your convictions about veganism. VN

Long-time vegan **Marla Rose** *has an answer for just about anything. Email your questions to askmarla@vegnews.com.*

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PRODUCT FEATURES:
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Lip Service

Armed with a bit of knowledge, lipstick-loving vegans can have their makeup and eat it, too.

By Aurelia d'Andrea

THE MAKEUP SECTION AT YOUR FAVORITE department store or beauty emporium is a one-stop shop for sensory overload. So many brands! So many colors! So many labels to read! Even with a list of cruelty-free companies in hand, a compassionate consumer's peace of mind can come only with a solid understanding of what's *really* inside a product—especially when dealing with lipsticks, which we inadvertently ingest while wearing. Is isononyl isononanoate acceptable for vegans? (Yes!) What about carmine? (Nope!) Before committing to that tube of classic red lipstick this holiday season, you'll definitely want to know your (vegan) Diisostearyl malate from your (non-vegan) digyclerides.

Lip-smacking stats

Eighty-seven percent of females worldwide wear lipstick, and sales in 2015 are expected to reach nearly $1.5 billion. More shocking than those sky-high figures is the fact that the average lipstick-wearing woman ingests nearly four pounds of lip product over the course of her lifetime. For consumers of conventional lipsticks, that's four pounds of preservatives, animal-derived emollients and waxes, and colorants made from insects and questionable chemicals. And that's not even the worst of it.

A 2013 study at UC Berkeley's School of Public Health tested more than two dozen drug- and department-store lipstick and lip gloss brands and discovered unhealthy levels of toxic heavy metals, including lead and chromium, the latter being a carcinogen linked to stomach cancer. Add senseless animal-testing policies to the equation, and a ruby-red kisser starts to lose its appeal, fast. There is good news, though, as plenty of vegan options exist, and the market continues to expand every year.

PrettyEasy

These tried-and-true vegan brands take the guesswork out of the cosmetics shopping experience.

ILLUSTRATION BY **RUBY ROTH**

The color conundrum

If you're going for a lipstick derived from plants and not a chemical laboratory, the odds of finding a bold shade of red or pink aren't very high. Generally, you can have "natural" or you can have "flashy," but it's rare to find them together in the same product. Red tints in conventional lipsticks are frequently produced with carmine, a deep orangey-red colorant derived from the shells of an insect native to Mexico. The tiny critters feed on the red blossoms of flowering cactus plants, which tints them from the inside out. The bugs are then ground into a paste and processed into a "natural" dye used in everything from packaged cake mixes to cosmetics.

According to Hannah Folli, chemist and founder of cosmetics brand Aromi, an alternative to achieving the sought-after red lip color doesn't exist, which is why her company doesn't limit itself to strictly natural ingredients. "Currently," she says, "there just isn't an FDA-approved, non-synthetic colorant source that can create such vibrant lip products."

While not technically "natural," Aromi's lip products are cruelty-free and vegan, and made with FDA-approved colorants that don't include lead or other ingredients known to cause cancer. Other brands with similarly "vegan-safe" ingredients include Manic Panic (known for its flamboyant range of vegan hair colors) and Obsessive Compulsive Cosmetics.

Lead is also most commonly found in red lipstick pigment and has been detected in drugstore brands such as Maybelline, Cover Girl, and L'Oréal, as well as in brands we often think of as "safe," including those produced by The Body Shop and Burt's Bees. While the FDA promises that the lead levels found in these products is miniscule enough to be considered harmless, for some of us, that's not good enough.

Smooth moves

Besides color, texture is an important factor when making a lipstick purchase. Whether you're after a dry, matte finish or a thick layer of high-gloss shine, consumers will find that the emollient quality in mainstream lipstick is often produced from beeswax, lanolin, petroleum, or a combination thereof.

When scouring labels, look for vegan-friendly candelilla wax, a common base ingredient derived from a plant grown in the deserts of northern Mexico known for its hydrating properties. Ditto for carnauba wax, which is scraped from the fronds of a palm native to Brazil. Ricinus communis seed oil—better known as castor oil—is another vegan-friendly ingredient growing in popularity among lipstick manufacturers. Jojoba oil and shea butter are sourced from plant seeds and nuts respectively, and are more commonly found in organic products and those marketed as "natural."

When in doubt, opt for certified vegan brands (see "Pretty Easy"), or consult the Environmental Working Group's online database to discover whether an ingredient is vegan, safe to ingest, or—hopefully—both. Furthermore, the Skin Deep mobile app is free, and allows you to scan barcodes at the store to discover the safety ratings of tens of thousands of products such as toothpaste and lipsticks.

Product-loving vegans needn't relinquish their tubes, tints, and glosses: it's simply a matter of getting acquainted with the language of lipstick labels and the sometimes hard-to-read ingredient lists. Once you get to know the big offenders—and the vegan-friendly counterparts—you'll be hitting Sephora with the confidence of a makeup pro.

VegNews Travel + Beauty Editor **Aurelia d'Andrea** *is still searching for that perfect shade of cruelty-free vegan lipstick. In the meantime, she's content with a dab of coconut oil to keep her lips soft and hydrated.* VN

Vegan*Verboten*

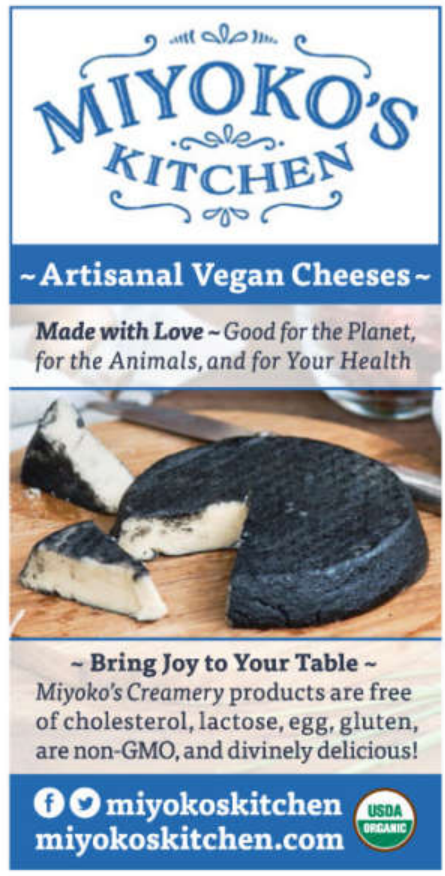
When examining the packaging on your next tube of lipstick, you'll likely stumble upon these common ingredients:

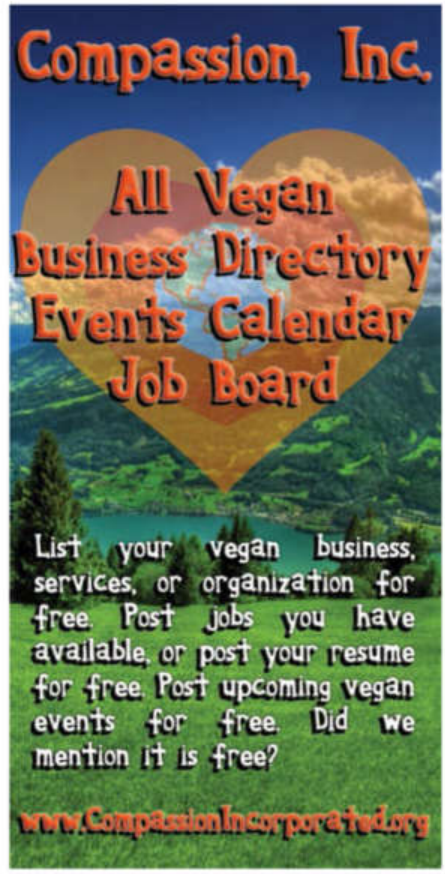
Beeswax
This wax, sometimes called cera alba, is—surprise!—produced from bees.

Carmine
This colorant derived from insects is also referred to as carminic acid, cochineal extract, natural red 4, or E120.

Diglycerides
Often called E471, this emollient can be sourced from the fat of cows and pigs.

Lanolin
Derived from sheep's wool, lanolin is used as a skin softener.



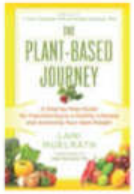


MediaLounge

READ / WATCH / LISTEN / ONLINE

VegNews staff picks for today's best books, blogs, apps, films, and more.

READ



The Plant-Based Journey

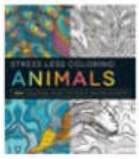
A Step-by-Step Guide for Transitioning to a Healthy Lifestyle and Achieving Your Ideal Weight

We all need a little wisdom in life. Thankfully, award-winning nutrition and fitness specialist Lani Muelrath is here to help. With more than 40 years of plant-food experience, the author's latest book (a #1 Hot New Release on Amazon) points to scientific research to help guide everyone from lifelong omnivores looking for an "awakening" to seasoned vegans needing a refresher. By showing people how to take control of their health through diet, exercise, and lifestyle strategies, Muelrath's first-rate advice is only made better by her accompanying 25 mouthwatering recipes.

The Vegan Studies Project

Food, Animals, and Gender in the Age of Terror

While not officially a college course yet, vegan studies just might soon be thanks to author Laura Wright. In her latest book, the Western Carolina University English professor coins a new discipline that examines gender and veganism. Wright explains the juxtaposition of vegan idealogies as both a threat and an ideal relative to mainstream culture, and how the physiology of a vegan body differs from that of a meat-eater's. Where was this course when we were in school?

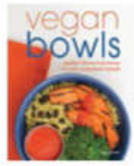


Animals

100+ Coloring Pages for Peace and Relaxation

For us, coloring books are up there with happy hour as one of our favorite ways to unwind, which is why this December, our weekends will be spent on the couch with a glass of wine, a handful of crayons, and this adult-friendly book. Featuring 100 gorgeous animal illustrations of majestic lions, seahorses, cuddling giraffes, and an array of butterflies, *Animals*—part of the Stress Less Coloring series—allows you to channel your inner Van Gogh while feeling like a kid again.

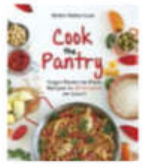
COOK



Vegan Bowls

Perfect Flavor Harmony in Cozy One-Bowl Meals

Award-winning blogger Zsu Dever's second foray into book publishing finds the San Diego chef tackling one of our favorite food presentations: the bowl. With recipes ranging from Sofrito Crusted Tempeh, Korean Bean Bulgogi, and Puttanesca with Sautéed Kale, each dish serves as a complete meal thanks to the inclusion of a protein, starch, and vegetable. They're bowls, so be prepared for an infusion of tastes the author describes as "flavor harmony."



Cook the Pantry

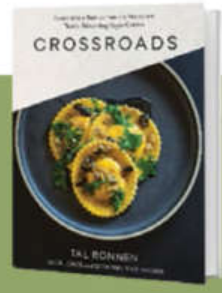
Vegan Pantry-to-Plate Recipes in 20 Minutes or Less

After releasing three cookbooks in 2014, infallible culinary genius Robin Robertson ends her short sabbatical with *Cook the Pantry*, which includes 100 recipes that require no pre-planning, and take 20 minutes or less to make. Using only ingredients that can be found in your pantry, this cookbook will be your new go-to for a quick, after-work dinner, lazy weekend brunch, and everything in between. Highlights include Suddenly Sushi Salad, Artichoke Muffaletta Po' Boys, and Chocolate-Coated Walnut-Stuffed Dates in Pastry.

Nom Yourself

Simple Vegan Cooking

With a massive Instagram following and a successful blog of the same name, Mary Mattern has quickly become the voice of vegan millennials. The 29-year-old first parlayed her online success into a job as a vegan personal chef for celebrities such as singer/songwriter Ellie Goulding and actor Jeremy Piven.



Crossroads

Extraordinary Recipes from the Restaurant That Is Reinventing Vegan Cuisine

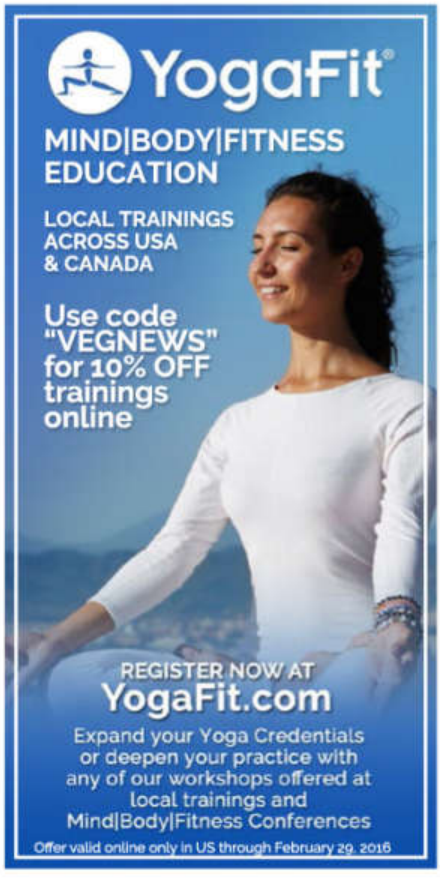
You'd better come with the goods when you describe your cookbook as "reinventing vegan cuisine." Luckily, Tal Ronnen's latest lives up to its subtitle thanks to an array of Mediterranean-inspired dishes that spotlight refined and satisfying plant-based foods. The tofu-free tome highlights an assortment of international food from Egypt and Morocco to Italy and France. We expect the Kale Spanakopita with Harissa Sauce, Sweet Potato Latkes with Spiked Applesauce, and Cauliflower Bisque with Fried Capers will become favorites of the VegNews staff.

Now, she's entering the world of publishing with her premiere cookbook, *Nom Yourself*, which proves why her simple-yet-delicious recipes—including Miss Mary Macaroni Salad, Cannellini Caprese Crostini, and Sweet Banana Porridge—have attracted attention from readers of all ages who embrace veganism for both its health benefits and the good it does for animals and the environment.

Vegan-Ease

An Easy Guide to Enjoying a Plant-Based Diet

With the word "ease" built into the title, you'd expect Laura Theodore's third cookbook to be a simple venture through plant-based cooking. And it is. With more than 130 recipes—each ranked with an "ease-factor"—the book features full menu plans and shopping lists so you can decide how to fit plant-based eating into your life. For Theodore, "easy" also means "healthy" because every recipe includes extensive nutritional information and guidance. As an added bonus, there's an entire chapter dedicated exclusively to holiday recipes.



The Plantiful Table
Easy, From-the-Earth Recipes for the Whole Family

In her first cookbook, vegan expert Andrea Duclos—known for her cooking and lifestyle blog Oh Dear Drea—brings approachable but nutritious meals from her family's table to yours. The dishes, from Tropical Waffles and Eggplant Kimchi Sandwiches to White Pizzas with Caramelized Onions and Roasted Figs, are ideal for both children and omnivores yet sophisticated enough for an adults-table-only soirée.

PLAY

Butcher Goes Vegan

We don't mean to be rude, but this new Butcher Goes Vegan smartphone app has kept our eyes on our phones for longer than we'd like to admit. Play as either a cow, pig, sheep, chicken, or turkey (affectionately named Tofurky) and use turbo rockets and karate kicks to defeat a mustachioed butcher and evade the slaughterhouse. The app isn't all fun and games, as pro-vegan messages regularly appear on screen to teach players about the harm in eating animals.

LISTEN

Food For Thought

As a professional speaker and author of seven books, Colleen Patrick-Goudreau knows a thing or two about veganism, which is what makes her podcast so informative and entertaining. Episodes run between 30 minutes and an hour and deal with topics ranging from eating compassionately to debunking myths about the plant-based lifestyle. Patrick-Goudreau also incorporates poetry, stories, and other literature into the shows, which are available for free on iTunes.

Main Street Vegan

More than just a clever name, Main Street Vegan shatters the myth that plant-based living is for the upper class by providing vegan recipes and tips suitable for anyone. Co-hosted by Victoria Moran (author of 12 books including *Main Street Vegan* and *The Love-Powered Diet*) and her daughter Adair, the weekly podcast uses engaging conversation to discuss the many ways to feel amazing while connecting our physical bodies to spiritual growth. The winter lineup includes such veg luminaries as Gary Francione, Donny Moss, and Rae Sikora.

Thug Kitchen Party Grub
For Social Motherf*ckers

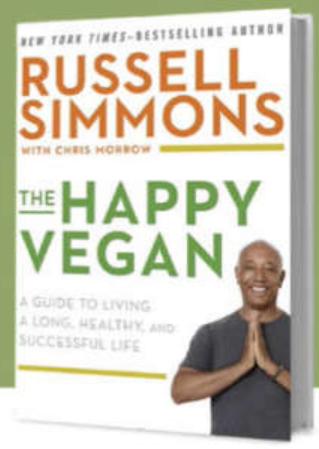
Whether you love or hate their style, you can't deny that foul-mouthed bloggers-turned-cookbook-authors Thug Kitchen make being offensive taste really good. Following a number-one slot on *The New York Times* best-seller list, *Thug Kitchen*'s second installment spotlights party food such as Landlocked Ceviche, Cinnamon Apricot French Toast, and Shaved Asparagus Pizza. Bringing these dishes to a holiday shindig will make you the coolest person on the block, while the cocktail section is sure to make those Secret Santa exchanges unforgettable.

The Happy Vegan
A Guide to Living a Long, Healthy, and Successful Life

If there's anyone who knows about living a long, healthy, and successful life, it's Russell Simmons. With a resumé that includes authoring three *New York Times* best-sellers, co-founding influential hip-hop label Def Jam Recordings, creating the Phat Farm clothing line, and producing Def Comedy Jam, the 58-year-old's latest venture is a 240-page book detailing the importance of eating a vegan diet. The tome is structured into three sections—Health, Environment, and Compassion—that detail why we should be mindful of our food choices. Once we are mindful, Simmons argues, then we can begin to experience the emotional and physical benefits that come from a cruelty-free lifestyle. We might not all enjoy the same level of notoriety as Simmons, but by following his advice, we can achieve the same level of personal happiness. Now *that's* real success.

VegNews sat down with Simmons to discuss his new book, diet and karma, and his approach to getting people to think differently.

VegNews: You set up your book with three main arguments: Health, Environment, Compassion. Is there a certain order to these?
Russell Simmons: For me, it's compassion, health, environment, because compassion is number one. A hundred billion animals born into suffering, made to be born through factory practices including rape and anything else they can imagine in order to make them put out as much product as they can squeeze from the lives of these creatures. It's the worst karmic disaster in the history of the world.



VN: What sort of response are you getting to the book?
RS: People are very, very excited. They think it's really well done. The idea of this book is to keep it real easy to digest, but then again, it's hard to digest. I call it *The Happy Vegan*, but it's the hardest group of facts to digest of all my books.

VN: You write about how you advise people to take a gradual, flexible approach toward veganism at first. Tell us about this.
RS: I'm not heavy-handed like that. Some people need to draw a line on this day. It's okay to become vegetarian on this day—then wait another day and become vegan. It's okay to do that, too. You can do whatever you want, but the move toward a more compassionate, healthier diet is necessary.

VN: You mention that the book won't change your life—it will *save* your life. What do you mean by that?
RS: I have friends who have heart disease in their 50s. I've had friends who've replaced their valves. So many people have diabetes and sickness and the cause is the amount of carcinogens in the beef that they eat. It's sick. A shift in diet can save your life, so that's what the book will do. Moving toward a more compassionate, healthy lifestyle will uplift you spiritually and give you freedom from the karmic effect of your choices. VN

Russell Simmons: photo courtesy of Russell Simmons

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The where-to-get-it section.

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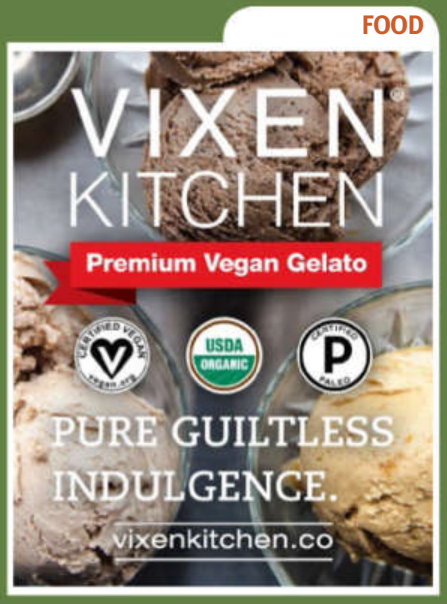

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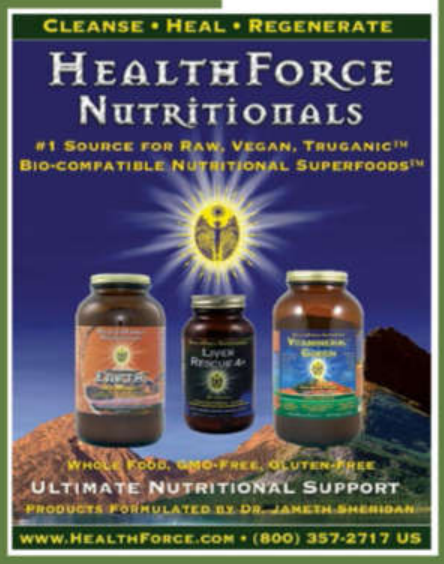

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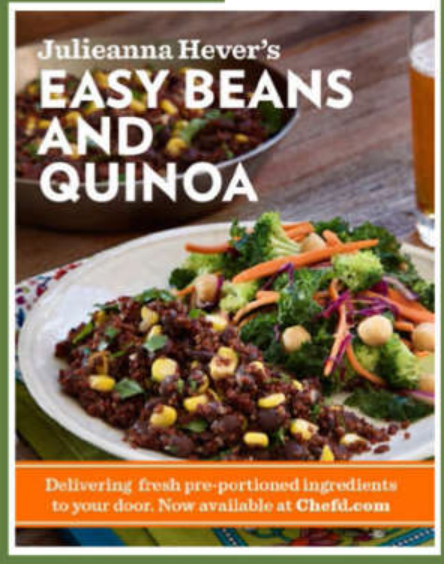

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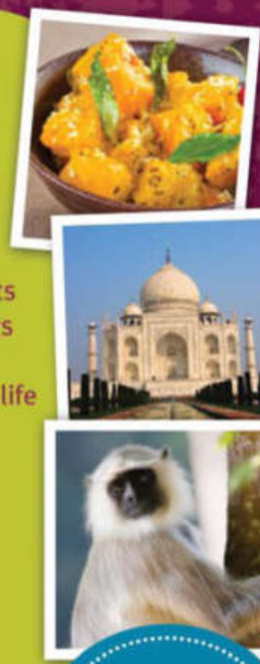
VegNews Great Adventure to India with VegVoyages

February 7–18, 2016

Join VegNews for an unforgettable journey to the fascinating country of India. Enjoy delectable vegan meals, explore off-the-beaten-path sites, visit an all-vegetarian village, and take in the wonders of this culturally rich and captivating nation.

Trip Highlights Include:

- Explore streets and back alleys of Delhi
- Stay at a Maharajah's palace
- Dine at the best veg eateries in India
- Meander through colorful bazaars
- Take a rickshaw through bustling city streets
- Enjoy daily yoga classes in stunning settings
- Learn Indian history and culture
- Bicycle in a national park teeming with wildlife
- Visit an animal sanctuary
- Have dinner with a local family
- Stay in a picturesque village
- Take a vegan cooking class
- See the Taj Mahal



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10 Things I'm Grateful For

By Tracey Stewart

As a former veterinary technician, Tracey Stewart knows a thing or two about the bonds we share with animal companions. The mother of two (and wife of comedian Jon Stewart) is also editor-in-chief of parenting website Moomah, which makes her the ideal candidate to write about how the quality of our lives is directly related to the care we provide for animals. Her dual talents are on display in her new book *Do Unto Animals*, a 200-page tome that uses gorgeous illustrations to teach readers how to speak "dog-ese" and "cat-ese"; explain why we shouldn't bother spiders, bats, and ground beetles; and offer ideas on how to foster a farmed animal even if you live in the big city. We asked this multi-faceted activist to share the 10 things she's most grateful for, and her answers range from the heart-warming (her animal-loving family) and humorous (her son wearing silly costumes) to the delicious (vegan cheese).

1

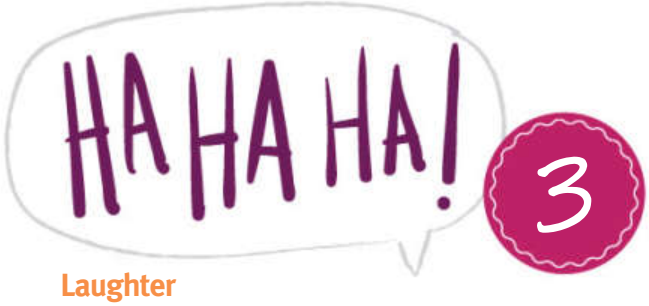
My animal companions

We have two horses, two pigs, four dogs, three rabbits, two guinea pigs, two fish, and a hamster that provide love, laughter, comfort, and purpose. Every day, these animals remind me just how lucky humans are to be able to share our lives with these noble creatures. I love providing for them and watching them thrive, and in return they are generous with their cuddles and cuteness.

2

My animal-loving family

To the outside world, I can sometimes seem eccentric. But not to my family—they're right there with me. They all want to do everything they can to better the world for all its inhabitants.



3

Laughter

When our daughter was younger, she went through a phase in which she was always banging into things because we didn't realize she needed glasses. Any time running into something made her cry, our son would dress in silly costumes and act crazy to get her to laugh. It worked every time. My husband and I believe in the value of humor, and we're always more than happy to laugh at ourselves when an opportunity arises.

4

Great friends

I am awash in wonderful friends who serve as inspirations in my life while acting as positive role models for my kids. Jo-Anne McArthur, for example, is an award-winning photojournalist, author, and activist who documents the plight of animals on all seven continents. When my daughter grows up, she wants to be just like Susie Coston, who is also my friend and the national shelter director for Farm Sanctuary. I'm incredibly lucky to call these women my friends.

5

Vegan cheese

With so many delicious plant-based cheeses out there that are just as (if not more) delicious than their dairy counterparts, I've given up on my plans for becoming a super-skinny vegan. I love everything from Miyoko's Kitchen; nothing beats the Double Cream Garlic Herb on a toasted bagel with a slice of tomato. Years ago, when I attempted to go vegan, I was underwhelmed by the non-dairy cheeses, but not any more!

My garden

From the process, the anticipation, the bounty, the smells, and the critters, I love every aspect of our garden. I treat myself to high-quality tools to feel professional, plus a nice hat and beautiful basket to really feel the part. Last summer we grew tomatoes, micro greens, kale, eggplant, peppers, and garlic. The fruit is delicious, healthy, and serves as a reminder of what can grow when we give something a little care.

6

Tracey Stewart: Taea Thale; Miyoko's Kitchen: ©Tim Porter

7

Animal sanctuaries

The experience of interacting with animals at a sanctuary has a profound effect on the mind and soul, as you come to know the animals not as rescues but as distinct individuals. At Farm Sanctuary in upstate New York, for example, Reuben the sheep is incredibly calm, while Ted, a giant male Holstein, displays a watchful curiosity. Wandering with the cows and sharing their grazing space atop the rolling meadow is a religious experience.

8

My vegan handbags

My go-to purse is made by Free People. It's good-looking, reversible, roomy, and comes with a clutch and smaller bag. I love it so much that I have one in every color!

9

Clean water

Recently, I was talking to a permaculture expert about the water on our farm. I said we'd had a real problem with the run-off from rain flooding our barn, to which he replied, "Water is never a problem. You just have to put it to better use." There was so much I loved about that way of looking at things.

10

Soft t-shirts

I adore a super soft t-shirt, and John Bartlett's animal tees are my favorite. Made in America of 100 percent responsibly sourced cotton, I wear them day in and day out—even to bed. VN

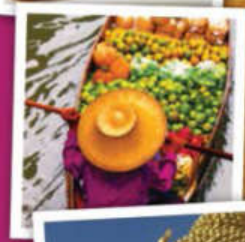
VegNews Food Lover's Tour of Thailand with VegVoyages

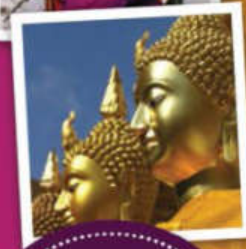
September 30–October 11, 2016

If you love food and adventure, don't miss this extraordinary journey to Thailand with VegNews. An intimate group of readers will experience sumptuous vegan cuisine, the famous Phuket Vegetarian Festival, and the vibrant culture of this enchanting Asian country.

Trip Highlights Include:

- Dine at Thailand's best vegan restaurants
- Meander through bustling produce markets
- Eat your way through a vegetarian festival
- Explore the backstreets of Bangkok
- Take vegan Thai cooking classes
- Wander through an all-vegetarian market
- Savor a vegan BBQ on the Maeklong River
- Visit an all-women vegetarian monastery
- Travel by gondola through peaceful canals
- Learn Thai history and culture
- Visit a wildlife rehabilitation center
- Island hop and snorkel in the Andaman Sea
- Revel in a two-hour Thai Massage





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Go Nuts!

Nut butters are all the rage, lining store shelves in blends that were unimaginable just a few years ago. Not only do these spreads—made from almonds, pecans, macadamia nuts, and walnuts (to name a few)—taste delicious on our morning toast, but they also inspire us to get creative in making our own. We consulted with Nicole Axworthy and Lisa Pitman, authors of the brand-new *DIY Vegan*, to get their tips on creating divine blends at home.

Gingersnap Cashew

Blend 2 cups cashews until smooth. Add 2 teaspoons blackstrap molasses, 1 teaspoon ground ginger, ½ teaspoon cinnamon, and a pinch of salt. Process until smooth.

Chocolate Chia Crunch

Blend 2 cups blanched peanuts until smooth. Add ½ cup chocolate chips and ⅛ teaspoon salt and process until smooth. Pulse in 2 tablespoons chia seeds.

White Chocolate Chai

Blend 2 cups blanched almonds until smooth. Add ¼ cup finely chopped cocoa butter, 2 tablespoons agave, 1 teaspoon masala chai spice, and a pinch of salt. Process until smooth.

BLEND!

Blend nuts in a food processor or high-powered blender until creamy.

ROAST!

Raw or roasted nuts work equally well, but roasting nuts first for 10 minutes at 350 degrees will create rich, heavenly butters.

GIFT!

For a present everyone will love, pour nut butter into a jar, tie with a bow, and store in the refrigerator until ready to gift.

PHOTO BY KATE LEWIS

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